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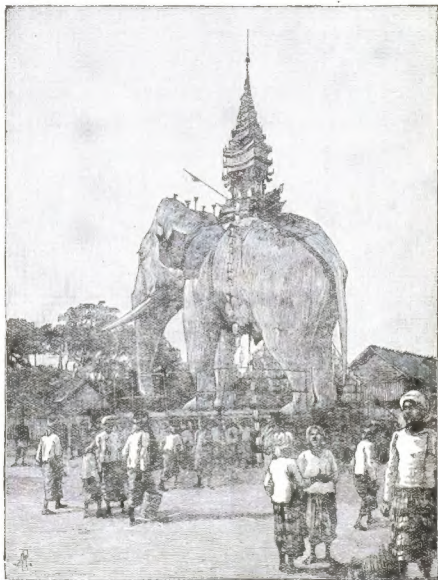
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# BURMA AND THE BURMESE.

COMPILED FROM SHWAY YOE, HUNTER, FYTCHE, PHAYRE, SMEATON, GRATTAN  
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Cambridge

## CONTENTS.

	Page
INTRODUCTION ...	1
THE PEOPLE ...	3
CHARACTER AND DAILY LIFE OF THE BURMESE ...	4
THE WOMEN ...	4
FOOD ...	5
DRESS ...	6
HOUSES ...	7
CHILDREN ...	8
SCHOOL ...	9
ENTERING A MONASTERY ...	11
TATTOOING AND EAR-BORING ...	12
MARRIAGE ...	13
INDUSTRIES ...	14
AMUSEMENTS ...	15
LANGUAGE ...	17
NATIVE GOVERNMENT ...	18
RELIGIONS ...	21
NAT WORSHIP, OR DEMONOLATRY ...	21
BUDDHISM ...	25
HISTORY OF BUDDHA ...	25
BUDDHIST MONKS ...	27
BUDDHIST BUILDINGS ...	29
BELLS ...	31
PAGODA FEASTS ...	32
BUDDHIST WORSHIP ...	32
THE LORD WHITE ELEPHANT ...	32
EXAMINATION OF BUDDHISM ...	33
PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY IN BURMA ...	35
HISTORY ...	41
CAPITALS ...	46
BURMA, PAST AND PRESENT ...	48
THE NEEDS OF THE BURMESE ...	49
THE BENEFIT TO INDIA OF THE ANNEXATION OF BURMA ...	50



# BURMA AND THE BURMESE.

## INTRODUCTION.

BURMA is a large country, now forming the eastern portion of the Indian Empire. It is bounded on the north by Tibet, on the east by China, the Shan States, and Siam; on the west by the Bay of Bengal and India. It formerly included Assam, Hill Tipperah, and Manipur. At present the two chief divisions are Lower and Upper Burma. The former is subdivided into ARAKAN, in the north; PEGU in the centre; and the TENASSERIM PROVINCES in the south. Lower Burma has an area of 87,000 square miles—rather less than that of the Central Provinces. The population in 1891 was about 5 millions. Upper Burma is much larger. The estimated area is 190,000—nearly as large as Bengal and Assam taken together; but the population is only about 3 millions. The entire area is nearly 280,000 square miles—larger than the Madras and Bombay Presidencies united, with a population of only about 8 millions.

**Physical Features.**—Some parts of India are sandy deserts, where rain seldom falls. Burma, on the contrary, from its abundant supply of rain, especially on the coast, is covered with luxuriant vegetation.

The country gradually slopes from the wild and mountainous region in the north to the delta of the Irawadi. It is intersected by mountain ranges, running north and south, between which flow the principal rivers the *Irawadi*, the *Sittaung*, and the *Salwin*. The Yoma range forms part of the western boundary in the north, and separates Arakan from Pegu in

the south. It gradually diminishes in height, till it ends in the rocky promontory of Cape Negrais. The Tenasserim Provinces are similarly divided from Siam. The country is generally hilly. The delta of the Irawadi is the only large level tract.

The coast is broken by creeks. Ramri and Cheduba are islands towards the north. There is a large number of small islands off the south coast.

The Irawadi is the great river of Burma. It rises in the northern mountains, and has an estimated course of about 1,100 miles. The valley through which it flows gradually widens, and the river empties itself into the sea by ten principal mouths, which form at last a net-work of tidal creeks, like the Sunderbans of Bengal. The Irawadi delta is constantly encroaching on the sea, owing to the mud brought down by the river. Some of the islands which are formed are occupied during the dry season by salt boilers and fishermen. The Irawadi is navigable by steamers as far as Bhamo, about 780 miles from its mouth. The *Sittaung*, about 350 miles in length, has a southerly course into the Gulf of Martaban. Still farther east is the *Salwin*, whose source has never been explored. It is supposed to rise near the Irawadi, and to have a course of about 750 miles. There are rocks and rapids in its course hindering navigation, but large quantities of timber are floated down the stream during the rains.

**Climate.**—The climate varies in different



parts of the country. On the coast only two seasons are known—the dry and the rainy, which are regulated by the north-east and south-west monsoons. The rainfall is heavy, resembling that of the Western Ghats. The average is about 127 inches a year, while that of Bombay is 70 inches. Inland, the fall diminishes. In Northern Burma there are three seasons, the cold, the hot, and the rainy. The rainfall is much less, and sometimes fails. On the whole, the climate is moderate, and, except in the jungles, healthy.

**Minerals.**—Burma is rich in minerals, some of which have not yet been turned to account. Beautiful marble is found about 15 miles north of Mandalay, which is largely used by the Burmese in making images of Buddha. Petroleum or kerosine oil is found near a village on the banks of the Irawadi. There are upwards of one hundred pits or wells, with a general depth of about 220 feet, though some of them are 300 feet. The liquid appears to boil up from the bottom like an abundant spring, and is taken up in buckets, and sent to all quarters of the country. The annual yield is calculated at about 12,000 tons.

Mines of amber are wrought. Jade, a greenish stone, which the Chinese form into beautiful ornaments, is also found. But Burma is especially noted for its rubies—now the most valuable gem. The stones are found about 60 or 70 miles north-east of Mandalay, over an area of about 100 square miles. Under Burmese rule, no stranger was allowed to approach the mines. All the gems found were supposed to be sent to the king, but many never reached him. The value of those received amounted to about 1½ lakhs of rupees a year. Sapphires are precious stones of the same composition as rubies, but generally of a beautiful blue colour. They are also found, but are more rare.

**Vegetable Products.**—Rice (of which the

Burmese count 102 different sorts) is the chief crop. The level country forms one vast rice-field. It is by far the most important export, and the prosperity of Lower Burma is mainly due to it. The value of the rice exported is about 6 crores of rupees. Teak timber is next in importance. The trees are felled in the forests, the logs are dragged by elephants to rivers, and floated down during the rains. Tobacco is largely grown, but as all the Burmese are inveterate smokers, a considerable quantity has to be imported from India. Sugar is chiefly obtained from the palmyra palm; sugar-cane is little cultivated. The plantain is the staple fruit; but mangoes, the guava, the orange, and others, are also common. The durian, a fruit with a very strong smell, is grown in the south.

The bamboo is plentiful, and largely used for houses and many other purposes. The varnish employed in lacquer work is the sap of a tree. Cutch, a resinous gum used for dyeing and other purposes in Europe and America, also obtained from a tree, is exported to the value of about 50 lakhs a year.

**Animals.**—The deep, impenetrable jungles of Burma afford shelter to many wild



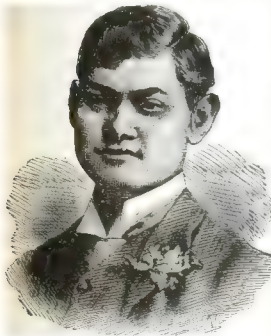
RHINOCEROS.

animals. Tigers, leopards, and bears, are the principal beasts of prey. Elephants are

found both wild and tame. The single and double horned rhinoceros is not uncommon. The usual domestic animals are found. The horse is a small variety. What are called Pegu ponies in India, come from the Shan hills to the east. Geese, duck, and fowls, are reared in large numbers, and cock-fighting is a favourite amusement with the people. The rivers and creeks swarm with fish.

### THE PEOPLE.

Burma is inhabited by several races. The Burmese proper are short, stout, well-made, of a brown complexion, with coarse abundant black hair on the head, and rarely any on the face. They are considered intermediate between the Chinese and Malays. The Burmese excel in wrestling, rowing, football, and other athletic exercises; they are clever as carpenters and



smiths. The portrait below is that of a Burmese who went to England to study for the bar, and took a very high position.

The name the Burmese give their own race is Mran-ma (as written), corrupted commonly into Ba-má, and from this the various forms of Burma appear to have been taken.

There are several races scattered over the country.

**Talaings.**—The aborigines of Lower Burma are supposed to have been the Muns. Indians from Telingana, south of Orissa, several centuries before the Christian era, came for purposes of trade to the tract about the mouths of the Irawadi, Sittaung, and Salwin, then called Suvarana Bhūmi. They intermarried with the Muns, and their descendants received the title of Talaings from the name of the country whence the colonists had sailed. This name was extended in later times to all Muns.

The Talaings differ little in appearance from the Burmese. Their features are perhaps more regular, the nose is not so flat, and the face is longer. In 1881 there were in Lower Burma about 155,000 pure Talaings, and 178,000 of mingled Burmese, and Talaing parentage, or Talaings who speak only Burmese. Of the pure Talaings more than half are in the Tenasserim Provinces.

**Karens.**—Next to the Burmese, the Karens are the most numerous race in Lower Burma. In 1881 they numbered over half a million. Their tradition is that they came from Central Asia about 13 centuries ago, crossing in their way the Desert of Gobi, called the "Sea of Rolling Sand." They are divided into 3 main groups. One is called the Pwo, or "Mother Branch;" another the Sgau, or "Father Branch." The third and largest class yet known is the Bghai, including several subdivisions, among whom are the Red Karens.

**Shans.**—The Shans came over from the Shan States, to the east of Burma. They are supposed to belong to the same stock as the Ahams of Assam. The Shans are careful cultivators, and hardworking; they are also great traders and pedlars. Their number in Lower Burma in 1881 was about 60,000.

**Chins, &c.**—The Chins, Kakhyens, and Singphos are wild tribes on the frontier, which came down to levy blackmail on the more peaceful inhabitants. The Chins are found in large numbers in Upper Burma. The most remarkable fact about them is that they tattoo the faces of their young girls, so as not to leave even an eyelid free from the hideous operation. They are rapidly adopting Burmese habits on the eastern side of the Yoma range, and their language is also giving way to Burmese.

In the following chapters the Burmese are specially described. The Karens will be noticed separately.

The description of Burmese life and character is mainly abridged from *The Burman, his Life and Notions* by Shway Yoe,\* the best English work on the subject.

#### CHARACTER AND DAILY LIFE OF THE BURMESE.

The Burmese is calm and contented. He does not want to grow rich. When he does make a large sum of money, he spends it all on some pious work or on a feast. He jogs on through a cheerful existence, troubled by no anxious cares and free from all temptations of ambition. His daily round is simple enough. In the morning after his bath, he loiters about, talking to the neighbours till breakfast time, or perhaps strolls out to the corner of his paddy-field, and indulges in a smoke. After breakfast he probably dozes through

the heat of the day, and when the shadows begin to get long, saunters about again. A semblance of regular labour appears when the paddy is being sown or the grain reaped, but even then no one is in the least inclined to disturb himself for the sake of rapid work. The evenings are spent ordinarily at a play during the fine season, or in converse over a cheroot at a friend's house during the rains. Variety comes occasionally in the shape of a hilarious journey to a distant pagoda feast, or a trip down the river. His greatest ambition is to see the village boat successful at the races, and the village champion cock or buffalo triumphant over all competitors.

No calamity is so overwhelming as to make the Burmese despond. Some years ago a terrible fire occurred in Mandalay, and spread so rapidly that the inhabitants, of a whole quarter were unable to save anything but the clothes they wore. When a benevolent European went next day to try to relieve them, he found that they had fitted up a kind of rough theatre amid the charred stumps of their houses, and were laughing and making jokes about their blackened surroundings.

The Burmese are generally peaceful and law-abiding, but murders are occasionally committed for trifling causes. A man was painting his boat; his neighbour did not like the smell of the operation, and told him to desist. The man went on painting, and when he had finished, in walking towards his house he passed his neighbour, who cut him down with a chopper, and killed him. A wife cooked the daily meal of her husband; he did not like the curry she had made, and in his displeasure, he killed her.

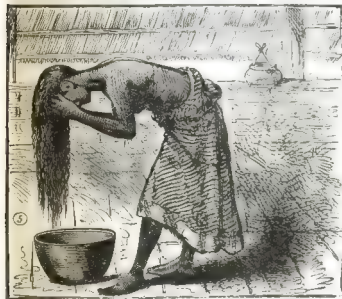
#### THE WOMEN.

A Burmese does not work for his living if he can help it. He seems to believe

\* Macmillan & Co. 2 vols.

that his womankind were sent into the world to save him trouble. The women share this belief, and do their allotted work like men.

Women in Burma occupy a much freer and happier position than they do in Indian social life. They go about freely; manage the household, buy the daily supplies in the bazaar, and in every respect take an active part in domestic affairs.



WASHING THE HAIR.

There is hardly a single house in a whole village where something is not offered for sale; a few dried fish, betel nuts, cardamoms, cocoa-nuts, cheap knives, &c. Where there are many girls about the house, cloths are woven at odd times in the loom which stands in the compound or in a corner of the verandah of every house.

The Burmese wives make successful women of business. They conduct not merely retail trades, but also large wholesale concerns on account of their husbands, and are very good hands at driving a bargain.

Like their sex in some other countries, Burmese women, when angry, use the most abominable language.

### FOOD.

There are in general only two meals in the day; breakfast at about 8 in the morning, and dinner at 5 in the afternoon. There is no difference in the food at the two meals. The staple article is plain boiled rice, which is piled up in a heap on a huge platter, round which the household arrange themselves, sitting on their heels. The curry which is taken with it is placed in little bowls, and each one of the party has his own plate, and helps himself. Spoons and forks and Chinese chopsticks are unknown. Ordinarily the curry consists of a soup, in which chillies and onion figure largely. The other ingredients are very various. Tamarind leaves and those of the mango-tree are used by the very poor. Along with the curry, which has always much salt and oil in it, there are a variety of condiments, especially, the strongly-flavoured fish paste,

without which no Burmese would consider his meal complete. There are different kinds of fish paste. One is called "raw-eaten fish paste," because it does not require to be cooked. Another sort is called "pressed fish;" a third, "pounded fish." Sometimes the red stinging ant is used along with the fish paste; sometimes it is fried in oil by itself. A kind of pickled tea is largely used. Most of the Burmese are tea drinkers. They take a piece of caked sugar with each mouthful of tea that they drink. Nothing is ever drunk at meals, but each one,

when he has finished, goes to the earthenware jar, full of water, which stands in a corner of the verandah, and rinses out his mouth. It is a lamentable fact that many Burmese in the low country now drink beer and spirits. But this is never done at meals nor in the house, where indeed the wife would not allow it. The tippling Burmese goes to the toddy-shop for his liquor, and the worst of it is that he does not know when to stop.

After meals every one smokes—men, women, and children. The ordinary Burmese cheroot is very mild. The cigar for home consumption, known as the green cheroot, is very large, from 6 to 8 inches long, and about an inch in diameter at one end and tapering to half that breadth at the other. In the manufacture of it, chopped tobacco leaves and pieces of the stem of the tobacco plant and the pith of a species of *Euphorbia* are the chief ingredients. The cover is often made of the leaf of the teak-tree; a piece of red raw silk fastens it at the end put in the mouth. All Burmese ladies are clever at rolling cheroots.

Chewing betel is carried on in the interval between smokes.

#### DRESS.

Both sexes are proud of the length of their hair, and it is not uncommon to see it reaching below the knee and down to the ankles. The men wear it in a knot on the top of the head; the women gather it behind. Both men and women are in the habit of adding to its size by interweaving false tresses.

The full dress of a rich man is simple and picturesque. A silk cloth, 15 cubits long and about 2½ wide, is wound round

the body, tucked in with a twist in front, and the portion which remains gathered up and allowed to hang in folds from the waist or thrown over the shoulder. The body is



A BURMESE AMBASSADOR TO LORD RIPON.

covered with a short white cotton jacket, over which a dark or coloured cloth one is often worn. Round the head a flowered silk handkerchief is loosely worn as a turban. Poor people have only strips of cotton

cloth; but nearly every person has some article of silk.

Women wear a simple piece of cotton or silk, almost square, 4½ feet long by about 5 broad, and woven in two pieces of different patterns. This is wound tightly over the bosom, and fastened with a simple twist of the ends. A loose cotton jacket is also worn, and over the shoulders is thrown a bright silk handkerchief, the same as that used by the men for turbans. Nothing is worn on the head except flowers, twisted into the hair.

Valuable gold ornaments are reserved for special occasions.

### HOUSES.

Although the pagodas and temples of Burma are remarkable for grandeur, most of the Burmese live in flimsy bamboo huts, and even rich men seldom think of building for themselves fine houses. The cause of this is probably found in the regulations of the Burmese Government. Brick houses were forbidden; gilding was not allowed,

and permission to paint the pillars of a house was granted to very few. All houses are one-storied, for it would be a degradation to have the feet of some one over your head.

A Burmese house stands on posts, so that the floor is seven or eight feet from the ground. This protects it from damp, and from inundation during the rains. The house often consists of only one room, usually however of two or more, and to the front of the house there is always a verandah, three or four feet lower than the house.

The posts which form the main portion of the house are usually six in number, and all have their names. An astrologer must decide whether a place is lucky to build on, and when it should be commenced. Posts are masculine, feminine, and neuter. Male posts are of equal size at both ends; females are larger at the bottom; those which swell out at the middle are neuter. Luck, good or bad, is supposed to depend upon the choice of the posts.

Poor people use bamboo instead of wood, and make their walls of mats, woven of the



A BURMESE VILLAGE.

same substance split up. Occasionally they employ common jungle timber. Richer people make use of the teak or other woods

which white ants will not attack. The roof is sometimes composed of small flat tiles, but more commonly of thatch. As thatch is very inflammable, every house is provided with a long hooked bamboo, by which to pull off all the thatch when a fire breaks out in the neighbourhood. In some parts of the country, pots of water are also kept in readiness. In Rangoon and Moulmein, tiles or small wooden slabs are being introduced.

In the better class of houses the floors are made of planks, but poorer people have only bamboos, laid side by side on the cross-beams, and tied down by rattans. They are not pleasant to walk on, and refuse is allowed to drop between them on the ground. Were it not for the pariah dogs, the houses would soon be unhealthy.

In many houses in Rangoon, English furniture has been introduced; but generally they contain only a box for clothes or other articles, a few mats and hard bamboo pillows. The Burmese do not sit on chairs, and without chairs, tables are useless.

During fine weather, cooking is done in the open air behind the house. The cooking apparatus is only a box, two or three feet square, and 6 inches deep, filled up with earth or ashes, and on the top of this the wood used as fuel is piled. The cooking utensils consist of two or three earthen pots, with lids to them, and a wooden rod to stir the contents with. Close at hand is a jar full of water, with a ladle—half a cocoa-nut with a handle through it.

The abundance of land allows every one to have a courtyard of his own. In this the owner keeps his implements. There is also a hand rice-mill, in which paddy is husked, the grain being kept stored in a small granary in the compound.

There are always a few domestic animals and pets about the premises. Every family has its dog.

## CHILDREN.

**Childbirth.**—The treatment of the mother during this is even more barbarous than that in India. As soon as the child is born, she is rubbed all over with turmeric, and a big fire is lighted near her, while all the rugs and blankets in the family are heaped over her. As speedily as possible, the midwife prepares a draught called green medicine. This the victim in bed has to drink constantly for seven days, and for the same time, besides the blankets, is surrounded with hot bricks. On the seventh day she sits over a large jar of boiling water, covered with a blanket. After about an hour of this, she has a cold bath, and is then free to do as she pleases. She usually goes to bed. The effects are very hurtful. Numbers die, and those who survive get prematurely old. A young mother of 14 or 16 is changed into a woman of 30 with her first baby. More enlightened treatment will gradually be introduced.

**Babies.**—A baby's cradle generally consists of a rude basket, covered with a blanket or some old clothes, swinging by a couple of ropes from the roof in the centre of the house. The mother may often be seen sitting by it, swinging it backwards and forwards with songs of different kinds. The following are specimens:

When a child is quiet the words may be

"Sweet, my babe, your father's coming,  
Rest and hear the songs I'm humming;  
He will come and gently tend you,  
Rock your cot and safe defend you."

A noisy child is thus addressed:

"Mercy, what an awful squall!  
Don't you love mamma at all?  
Where's your father? Fie, for shame!  
He could quiet you if he came,  
But he won't; he lolls and smokes,  
With the neighbours cracks his jokes."

"Oh you plaguy, nasty brat!  
I must call the great big cat,  
He will come and squeeze and bite,  
Scratch and eat you up outright."



**Naming.**—The child is usually named about a fortnight after birth. A fortunate day and hour is sought from the astrologer, and friends are invited to a feast. The child's head is usually washed for the first time on this day. It is the rule that a child's name must begin with one of the letters belonging to the day on which it was born. The letters of the alphabet are apportioned to the days of the week, according to the following rhyme which every Burmese child can repeat:—

Ka, kha, ga, gha, nga Taninla.

Sa, sha, za, zha, nya, Ainga.

Ta, tha, da, dha, na, Sanay, &c.

Children born on Monday have for the initial letter of their names K, Kh, G, Gh, or Ng. Tuesday's children have the choice of letters in the second row, and so on.

The common belief is that a man's disposition is according to the day of his birth. A man born on Monday will be jealous; on Tuesday, honest; on Wednesday, short-tempered, but soon calm again; on Thursday, mild; on Friday, talkative; on Saturday, quarrelsome; on Sunday, miserly.

Each day has also its particular animal. Monday is represented by a tiger; Tuesday, by a lion; Wednesday, by an elephant with tusks; Thursday, by a rat; Friday, by a guinea-pig; Saturday, by a dragon; Sunday, by a fabulous half-beast, half-bird. Worshippers present red or yellow wax candles at pagodas made into the shape of these animals according to the day on which they were born.

The Burmese have no surnames. A man may have a dozen sons, not one of whom has the same name as his father. Moun, literally "brother," has come to stand practically for "Mr." Most Burmese change their names several times. A young child may first be called "Little Man." A few years later he may be "Big Little Man." Later, he may call himself "Mr. Boy."

When he reaches the age of forty; he may call himself "Old Small" or "Old Boy."

When a young man wishes to change his name, he makes up a number of packets of pickled tea, and sends round a friend to all his acquaintances with the following message: "I have come from Mr. Golden Stupid. He is not to be called by that name any longer. When you invite him, call him Mr. Celebrated Father. Be good enough to eat this pickled tea."

Every woman married or unmarried may be called Mah. When she becomes elderly, Mé is very often used.

A child's horoscope is written as in India.

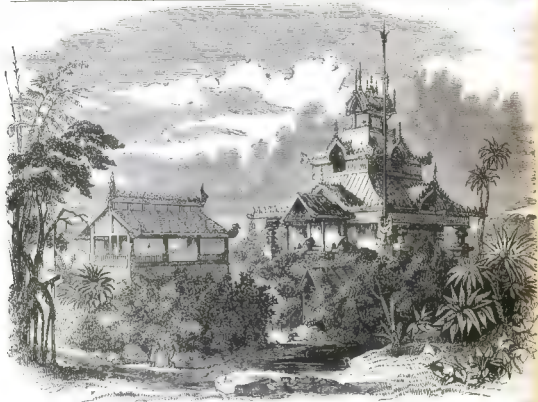
## SCHOOL.

Buddhism is the religion of the Burmese. The priests or monks are called *pungyis*, meaning "great glory," and the monasteries in which they live are called *kyoungs*. It was formerly the custom for every boy in Burma, when he reached the age of about 8 years, to go to a *kyoung*. Every Buddhist boy was taught to read and write; but it was not thought necessary to teach girls.

The education imparted is thus described: When a boy enters the *kyoung* school, he receives a roughly-made black wooden slate. On this are written some of the letters of the alphabet. After a little explanation, he is, for the next few days, engaged in shouting out their sounds at the top of his voice. If he stops shouting, it is a sign that he has stopped working, and is corrected accordingly. The more noise there is going on, the more work.

Dull scholars take a year to acquire the alphabet, with its combinations, called the "Great Basket of Learning." Lazy boys have to take those who are diligent on their backs, and march with them up and down the school-room. Sometimes they





A KYOUNG MONASTERY AND REST HOUSE.

are thrashed, but the other punishment is the more dreaded.

The books afterwards studied are all religious, mostly in the Pali language, and unintelligible to the readers. When there are several at the same stage in their studies, they repeat their lesson word for word after the teacher, sitting in wide rows before him, and all chanting with the same emphasis. The twenty or thirty boys crouching down on their knees, their little heads every now and then bowing down to the ground over their hands joined in supplication, the yellow-robed monk, sitting cross-legged on a raised seat before them, repeating the clauses of the form of

worship which the childish voices instantly catch up, forms a scene not quickly forgotten.

The school boy slowly learns to repeat books relating to the existences and teachings of Buddha, but nothing else. When Burma came under the British Government, schools were opened to teach English, arithmetic and other subjects, fitting the pupils for public offices and other employments. Rangoon now has its College, preparing students for the Calcutta University Examinations and there are High Schools in the principal towns. The kyoung schools, however, are still largely attended.



About one in four of the population of Burma is able to read or is under instruction, while in India the proportion is only about one in twenty.

### ENTERING A MONASTERY.

Until a Buddhist has assumed, at least for a time, the yellow robes of a monk, he cannot claim to be more than a mere animal. It is not till he has subjected himself to the discipline of the *kyoung*, that he can reap the fruits of good actions in former births, and can look forward to a more glorious future. The novice drops his secular name, and receives a new honorific name, to mark that it is now open to him to escape from suffering. He loses the name when he returns to the world again, but it is sufficient that he has once borne it.

The usual time for the ceremony is at the beginning of July. During the rains, the monks are supposed to live for three months in the *kyoungs*, and not go about. Fifteen is the proper age; but this regulation is not observed by some in Lower Burma, among other reasons because that is just the most important age for the boy to be learning English and arithmetic, with a view to getting situations under Government or in English merchants' offices. In many cases, twelve, or even eleven, is the usual age.

The first step is for the astrologer to determine from the boy's horoscope a lucky day and hour. When this has been settled, three or four girls, the boy's sisters or friends of the family, dress themselves up in their finest silks and jewels (often borrowed), and go round inviting all their friends to come to the feast, presenting the usual little packet of pickled tea. Those invited generally send some present of money or victuals to make the feast as grand as possible.

On the appointed day the boy dresses in his finest clothes, and loads himself with jewellery as much as he can borrow. He then mounts a pony or gets into a richly decorated cart. Shaded by gilt umbrellas, formerly only allowed on such occasions, he passes through the village. A band of music goes before him, while his friends, male and female, crowd around him, the young men dancing and singing, the girls laughing and smiling. Thus he goes to all his friends, bidding them farewell as if he were going to renounce the world. The procession turns back to the house of the parents, where the head of the monastery to which the youth is to be admitted is seated with several of his brother monks. In front are ranged the presents for the monks—fruit, cooked food, mats, yellow cloth, &c. The boy throws off all his fine clothes and jewels, and binds a piece of white cloth round his loins. Then his long hair is cut off close to the head, which is shaved. The requisites for a monk have been prepared, yellow robes, belt, begging bowl, and so on. The boy comes forward, prostrates himself three times, raises his hands in reverence, and begs, in Pali formula got by heart, to be admitted to the Holy Assembly, that he may enjoy its advantages, and at last attain to the blessed state of *nibban* or *nirwana*. The head of the monastery gives the boy the garments; he is duly robed, and then it is announced that he is a member of the monastery. The feast at the parents' house begins immediately, and ends with theatricals which last till dawn.

Although every male should thus become a monk, there is no fixed time for wearing the yellow robes. In a few cases, the novice comes back again the same night, and assumes the lay dress. Others remain only 24 hours, long enough to enable them to go once at least round the village



begging from door to door. But it is not considered decent to leave under a week. Some stay longer—a fortnight, a month or two months. The more earnest remain at least one *Wah* or *Wax*, the months of the rainy season. A fervent Buddhist remains three Wahs, one for his father, one for his mother, and one for himself.

The novice in the monastery must go on with his studies. He has also to attend the monks, laying before them their daily food, water, the betel box, and whatever else they require. Every morning he must go round with the begging bowl strapped round his neck. He should eat only the food thus presented, but rich parents sometimes send meals daily, or even employ a cook to prepare his food.

Strict discipline is maintained. The novices are not allowed to go out at night. Breaches of this rule are severely punished. The culprit's hands are tied high above his head, and his naked back is beaten with a stout bamboo.

Further remarks about monasteries will be made in a subsequent chapter.

#### TATTOOING AND EAR-BORING.

No Burmese thinks that he has attained to proper manhood till he has been tattooed. At an early age he begins to get figures tattooed on various parts of his thighs. When the operation is finished, the whole body from the waist, in a line with the navel downwards to just beyond the knee-cap, is completely covered.

The operation is not by any means pleasant. It is therefore common to put the boy under the influence of opium while it is being done, though some parents will not allow this, for cases have occurred when the youth has died of an over-dose. The part swells up a great deal, and there is danger of fever; besides that, a few days afterwards the itchiness which supervenes

is almost intolerable, while if the skin is broken by scratching, there is not only a nasty sore but the figure is spoilt.

The instrument used is a pricker about two feet long, weighted at the top with a brass figure. The style part is solid with a round, sharp points split up into four by long slits at right angles to each other, which serve to hold the colouring matter, usually formed of lamb-black and oil.

The figures tattooed are those of all kinds of animals, tigers, cats, monkeys, and elephants being the commonest. Besides these there are few Burmese who have not charms of some kind tattooed on the arms, back, chest, or even on the top of the head, which is shaved for the purpose. These figures are of all kinds—lizards, birds, mystic words and squares, rings, images of Buddha, and sometimes merely a few scattered dots. Here the colouring matter is almost always vermilion.

Some of these tattooed charms are supposed to prevent a person from feeling pain when beaten, others guard against danger from snake-bite, musket-shots, drowning, the spells of wizards, and evil spirits. It does not matter to the Burmese although persons having these tattooed charms are shot or drowned. Their belief in their efficacy is practically ineradicable.

**Ear-boring.**—The first great event in a Burmese girl's life is the boring of her ears. Till that happens she is a child, free to play about by herself. After that when she walks out, it will be with her mother or other female relative. She then takes pains to adorn her hair, powder her face with yellow paste, and practises the sway of the body in walking which is considered so attractive.

The ceremony takes place at the age of 12 or 13, just when the girl has attained puberty. When a fortunate day and hour has been fixed by the astrologer, a great



feast is prepared, and all the friends of the family are invited. When the astrologer gives the sign, the ear-borer pierces the ear with a golden or silver needle. The girl is held down, while a band of music outside strikes up to drown her cries. The holes are afterwards so enlarged so as to admit ear-cylinders. The royal family and some of the higher ministers and their families were allowed to wear gold cylinders, ornamented with rubies or other precious stones. The poor content themselves with hollow pipes of coloured glass or keep the holes open with a roll of paper or cloth. Women sometimes, when travelling, put a large green cheroot through each hole, so that they can have a smoke whenever they want it.

Tattooing among the Burmese is a mixture of barbarism and superstition. It is characteristic of savages. The body is always most beautiful when left in its natural state, and not disfigured in any way.

#### MARRIAGE.

Marriage customs in Burma partly resemble those in England, partly those in India. Child marriages arranged by parents without the parties to be united having seen each other, are unknown. Formerly a young man was not considered of age to marry till he was twenty-four; now the age has become younger. The girl is not married till she has attained puberty.

As the Zenana system does not exist, young men and girls meet at plays, friends' houses, feasts. Young women often sell cheroots or other articles in bazaars, where they can easily be seen. There are also men who make it a business to know all the young women of the place, and who arrange meetings. The father and mother are never present at these meetings, though they can hear everything. Little presents are exchanged, and the consent of the

parents is asked. This is generally given. If refused, runaway marriages sometimes take place. The parents, though angry, afterwards usually receive the young couple into their house, when they come and ask for pardon. Occasionally, the girl hangs herself, if thwarted.

As in India, an astrologer must fix a fortunate day and hour for a marriage. The Burmese have superstitions about birth-days. Men born on certain days of the week must not marry women born on some other days. Thus a man born on Saturday must not marry a woman born on Thursday.

Saturdays and Thursdays,  
The serpent and the rat,  
You cannot find out worse days,  
Life's short enough at that.

The serpent and the rat are supposed to preside over Saturday and Thursday respectively. One or both contracting parties would soon die, if young people of these hostile days marry.

The marriage ceremony comes off in the house of the bride's parents. A great feast is prepared at the expense of the bridegroom or his parents. All the relations and friends are invited. The old custom that the bride and bridegroom should join their right hands together palm to palm in the presence of all the assembled guests, and then should eat rice out of the same dish, and feed each other with one or two morsels, has in many cases died out, at least in Lower Burma. The feast and the talk of those present is considered enough to solemnise the union.

After marriage the couple generally live for two or three years in the house of the bride's parents, the son-in-law becoming one of the family, and contributing to its support.

Polygamy is permitted, but most of the people have only one wife. A late king had 53 recognised wives, of whom 37 survived



him. His children numbered one hundred and ten. Besides the wives he had numerous concubines.

The liberty of divorce is practically unrestricted except by the laws about the division of property. Marriage is considered a civil contract which either party can dissolve; but, unless with good reason, the one that wishes to separate must suffer in property, more or less severely according as the plea is good or bad. Divorces are sanctioned by the village elders. Although readily obtained, they are not very numerous.

#### INDUSTRIES.

**Agriculture.**—This is the chief employment of the Burmese, about three-fifths of whom are engaged in the production and distribution of rice. Any part of the country may be used for rice cultivation, but low-lying plains annually flooded by the Irawadi produce the largest crops with least trouble. Farther up the country, irrigation must be employed.

The south-west monsoon, commencing early in June, soon reduces the ground in the lowlands to a soft sea of mud. The Burmese then proceeds to plough it. Standing on his plough, the farmer is dragged backwards and forwards till the ground is reduced to a smooth surface. Lazier farmers make children drive the buffaloes and plough oxen up and down the yielding mud, and then a log of wood is drawn over it to smooth it down. The seed is sown in nurseries, and transplanted. A knobbed stick or the hand is used to make holes in the ground at intervals of a few inches, into each of which a couple of plants are inserted. This work is left to women and children, while the farmer squats on one of the ridges, with a huge green cheroot in his mouth, and contemplates the operation. In Lower Burma the reaping is chiefly

done by men of Upper Burma. The grain is not cut close to the ground: very little more than the ears are cut off, and the straw, burnt in the hot weather of March and April, serves as manure.

A portion of the field, swept clean, serves as a threshing floor, and the grain is trodden out by slow-moving bullocks. To winnow the grain, it is thrown into the air, and the chaff is blown away. Part of the paddy is reserved for home use, part is sold.

The Burmese are content with a single crop a year. It is sown in June, transplanted in September, and reaped about December or January. The land is very fertile, in some parts yielding from 80 to 100 bushels an acre, each worth about a rupee.

Rice-farming would be profitable as well as easy work were it not for the reckless squandering of most of the cultivators. The Burmese are fond of gambling, and, like the Hindus, they throw away large sums on marriages and funerals. To get money, some of them take advances from the Madras money-lenders, called Chetties, and when once within their meshes, they can seldom escape.

Like the "royal elder brother" of China, the King of Burma went out once a year to plough the fields, which was supposed to lead to abundant crops.

Paddy is sent to the rice-mills, which free the rice from the husk, and prepare it for the European, American, and Chinese markets. The farmer can get a ready sale and a full price for all his surplus paddy. There are about 50 rice-mills in Burma.

The Karens and other hill tribes cut down the forest early in the year, burn the timber and brushwood when dry, and sow in the ashes a mixed crop of cotton, rice, and pumpkins or other vegetables, which ripen in about 5 months. The following spring they go to other plots of forest, and treat them in the same way. Not only are valuable teak forests thus



cut down, but the fires kindled at the season when everything is driest, spread far and wide, and kill the trees and saplings for many miles round a single Karen hamlet. Government is now setting apart certain tracts as forest reserves. This is disliked by the Karens. They say that once they were like jungle fowls, hiding where they liked, scratching the earth here and there; and putting in a grain of rice, and eating what came of it; but that now the Forest Department has put them into boundaries here and boundaries there, and that they feel like pigs in a pen.

Timber is, next to rice, the principal export from Burma. Burma affords the largest supply of teak timber in the world; and the forest require to be carefully preserved. Valuable trees should not be cut down and burnt for the sake of a single crop of paddy.

**Weaving.**—Next to cultivation, the most important industry is weaving. A loom is to be found in almost every Burmese house in the country. Many articles of dress are made of silk. Rearing silkworms, though very profitable, is looked upon with horror by good Buddhists as involving the taking of life. Silk-growers are classed together with hunters and fishermen. The last are regarded as the least criminal. They are said not actually to kill the fish,—they merely take them out of the water! The doom of all in the next world will be terrible.

The silk-growers in Burma are usually a despised race, living on the hill sides. They mostly sell the silk. After being made into thread, it is dyed of different colours. The weavers are young women who are very clever at working the treadle and shooting through the shuttle. Some of the patterns require between 20 and 30 shuttles. The native-grown silk is used only for every-day clothes; the finer are made from Chinese imported silk.

Home-made cloths are more durable than those imported. There is, however, an increasing demand for the latter as cheaper and more showy. That they do not last so long does not trouble the Burmese much, for he is fond of a change of dress, and, unless he is very poor, will never wear a waist-cloth except about the house, after it has been washed.

**Lacquer Ware.**—The Burmese are noted for beautiful lacquer ware, remarkable for its thinness and flexibility. The coarsest articles are made of wood, but all the better cups and boxes are made of a woven basket work of strips of bamboo. The varnish used is the sap obtained from the trunk of a tree. It is called wood-oil. Incisions are made in the tree, and the sap trickles into bamboos placed to catch it.

The articles lacquered are drinking cups, betel-boxes, ladies' toilet boxes, &c. The test of their excellence is when the sides will bend in till they touch without cracking the varnish or breaking the wicker work.

**Wood-carving.**—In this the Burmese are skilful. Their temples, monasteries, and sometimes their dwelling-houses, are ornamented with a profusion of quaint and delicate designs. Good carvers in wood are much esteemed.

There are several other branches of industry among the Burmese. Beautiful gold and silver work is everywhere made, earthenware, the casting of bells, the carving of images of Gautama, may also be mentioned.

#### AMUSEMENTS.

**Plays.**—There is no nation in the earth so fond of theatrical representations, called *puays*, as the Burmese. There is scarcely a man in the country who has not at some time of his life been an actor. When a Burmese is born there is a play; when he





BURMESE ACTRESSES.

is named there is a play; when a girl's ears are bored; when a youth enters the monastery; when he comes out again; when he marries; when he divorces; when he digs a tank; dedicates a pagoda; when there is a boat or horse race; a buffalo or cock-fight; whenever anything is to be done, there is a play. Lastly, there is a *puay* as grand as his friends can make it, when the Burmese dies.

The plays are always given in the open air, and any one who pleases may come in and look at them. In Rangoon there are buildings, and money is charged, but this is not the old custom. The guests, invited by packets of pickled tea, usually contribute a rupee or two towards the expense,

but otherwise the entire cost falls upon the giver of the play.

The band arrives some time before the commencement, and plays while the people gather. The performers, male and female, drop in with the other spectators. They are generally accompanied by servants to carry their dresses, and help them in robing. All of them, women as well as men, make their preparations in full view of everybody. They smoke all through the toilette; even during the play they sometimes smoke, and the king chews betel between the speeches.

The dramas are all founded on the tales told of the births of Gautama or on events in the lives of kings and heroes of India. None of them are original.

Puppet shows are equally popular. The puppets, which are often two or three feet high, are always expensively dressed. A puppet play sometimes extends over six or seven successive nights.

The plays last all night till sunrise. The people are kept awake partly by pickled tea. Occasional songs and dances are introduced, while some of the clowns perform wonderful feats in twisting themselves as if they had no bones, picking up coins with the mouth bent back to the ground, doubling themselves up so that the toes touch the forehead, and so on.

Most of the audience stay all the time; but mats and rugs are brought, and not a few after listening till midnight or thereabouts, lie down to sleep for two or three hours. Then they wake up, and follow the performance with as much interest as if they had heard every word of it.

**Dancing.**—Every Burmese man or woman is more or less acquainted with dancing. Young people practise it for the sake of the applause they get when they perform in a village feast or other ceremony. There are, however, professional dancers who are hired like the nautch girls of India.



The Burmese female dress does not admit of much motion. The girl is, as it were, in a narrow bag, reaching down to her feet, and trailing about on the ground behind her. The dances do not go greatly beyond posturing. The hands, fingers, elbows, and shoulders are twisted about as if they were circular jointed. It is quite a common thing to see a girl bend backwards till her lips touch the mat upon which she stands, and pick up from the ground rupees thrown there by the spectators. Some of the dancers receive large sums for their performances.

**Boat racing.**—Burma abounds with rivers, and boat racing is a favourite amusement. Villages challenge each other, and the greatest excitement prevails. Paddle boats are used in Lower Burma; up-country boats rowed with oars are sometimes used. The victorious crew go in procession up and down the village, preceded by bands of music, and every one in the place who can dance. Feasting is general, and then all move off to the plays.

**Football.**—The ball is composed of wicker work, and is about 4 inches in diameter. It is very light, and the object is to keep the ball as long as possible in the air without touching it with the hands. A single individual may play it by himself or there may be a circle of players. To play it, the waistcloth is tucked up close round the middle, so that the legs may be quite free. A good player starts the ball on his knee, knocking it up, catches it with a back stroke of his heel, repeated perhaps several times. Then he receives it on the knee again, or jerks it back and forward between the top of the foot and the knee for a time. This game affords excellent exercise.

**Cock fighting.**—This is a favourite pastime, and though forbidden by the authorities, is still carried on more or less openly in country villages and quiet streets in towns.

Many houses have their birds bred specially for their pluck in fighting. There are professional cock-fighters who have a variety of sharp steel spurs, which they fit on to cocks, and receive as payment a leg of every bird that is killed.

**Buffalo fights.**—In some parts of the country each village used to have its champion buffalo. Songs were composed in its praise, special guards were appointed to look after it, and the conqueror brought as much honour to the village as a personal victory of the inhabitants would have done. Being both brutal and dangerous, they have been prohibited.

**Gambling.**—Many of the Burmese are inveterate gamblers, involving themselves and their families in ruin. Endeavours are made to check it, but this is not easy.

#### LANGUAGE.

The Burmese language is monosyllabic, but words may be joined, as in black-board. There are no inflections to mark number or gender. Number is denoted by the adjective, as one man, four men. The same word may be any part of speech. The meaning of a sentence is largely determined by the position of the words. The arrangement is the reverse of that followed in English.

Many words have a great variety of meanings, which are largely increased by accents which foreigners find very difficult to distinguish.

The language is written from left to right, and there are no spaces between the words. The written characters are all, but one or two, composed of circles or parts of circles, having acquired that shape from the custom of writing with a pointed style on palm leaves. The alphabet is derived from the Magadhi or Pali, in which the sacred books of the Buddhists were originally written. The sounds of



## BURMESE.

ဘုရားသခင်၏သားတော်ကိုရုံကြံသော  
သုခပေါင်းကိုသင့်ပျက်စီးခြင်းသို့မရောက်။ အ  
ထင်တာဝန်အသက်ရှင်ခြင်းကိုရစေခြင်းငှါဘု  
ရားသခင်သည်မိမိတပါးတည်းသောသား  
တော်ကိုစွန့်တော်မူသင့်တိုင်အောင်လောက်သ  
းတို့ကိုချစ်သနားတော်မူ၏။

many of the letters have been changed. There are 10 vowels and 32 consonants. The letters of the alphabet have all names descriptive of their shapes, as, "great ka," "kurved ka," "big-bellied ta," "steep pa," "hump-backed ba," &c.

Pali is the language of the religious literature. Some of the most popular works give an account of the supposed 550 births of Gautama or Buddha. The original sounds cannot be exactly expressed in Burmese characters. Bishop Bigandet says, "The words having to pass, first through a Burmese ear, and next being expressed by Burmese letters, undergo great changes. To such an extent does the metamorphosis reach, that very often they are scarcely recognisable." *Buddha*, in Burmese, is generally called *Phra*; *Bodhisat* is *Phralong*; *Maha Meru* is *Mienmo*.

There is also a great variety of books written in Burmese, tales, dramas, &c.

Though a kind of paper is manufactured from bamboo pulp, books are usually written on palm leaves. For note-book purposes a kind of black tablet is used, with a whitish pencil.

## NATIVE GOVERNMENT.

The Burmese government was a pure despotism, the king sentencing to torture, imprisonment, or death, according to his pleasure without trial. Everything connected with him was called "golden." When he heard anything, it was said to have reached the "golden ears;" a sweet perfume pleased the "golden nose;" a person admitted to his presence was said to have been at the "golden feet." When



KING THEEBAW ON THE THRONE.

the king went out of his palace, the streets were lined with a fence six feet high to prevent the people from seeing him.

The Burmese ministers were of two classes. One class consisted of those whose authority was confined to the palace. The other consisted of administrative officers, properly so called, who constituted the Great Council of State, called in Burmese the *Hlut-daw*. This Council discharged at once the functions of a house of legislature, a cabinet, and a supreme court of justice. The President was nominally the king himself; or in his absence the heir-apparent, or some other member of the royal family: practically the prime minister usually presided.

There were in all 14 grades of officers who composed the Council. Eleven of these grades comprised four officers each. The *Wungyis* were the first. The term "Wun" by which many kinds of officials in Burma were designated, means literally a "burden," or the bearer of it. It is like the Indian term *Sardar*. *Wungyi* denotes a "great officer." "Secretary of State" would be the best meaning in English. There was no such division of labour among the Burmese ministers as in the West. The *Wungyi* had to direct military operations and act as general as well as to attend to revenue and act as judge. Next to the *Wungyis* were the officer commanding the principal cavalry regiments, and the *Athinwun*, in charge of civilians other than those of the royal family.

After these came the *Wundouks*, assistants of the *Wungyis*, and several other grades. The "Oath Recorders" administered the oath of fealty to all who entered the royal service. The oath was first written down on paper, and read

over in a temple before an image of Gaudama, the candidate repeating the words.



A BURMESE COLONEL.

The paper was then burnt, and the ashes were put in a cup of water. The water was



then stirred with a small faggot, in which miniature models of the five kinds of weapons used by the Burmese were all tied up together; and lastly, the person to be sworn in drank the cup of water. The five weapons were the bow, the spear, the sword, the cannon, and the musket.

The officers of the palace were also of several grades. The country at large was ruled by provincial governors, and was divided into provinces, townships, districts and villages. They did not receive any salaries, but squeezed what they could out of those under their jurisdiction.

Many of the ministers of state were originally palace domestics. A cooly was successively promoted through the grades of slipper-bearer, tea-server, and betel-box holder to that of Governor of the Royal Boats, and Mayor of Mandalay. Another officer of Theebaw was a slave of the young prince when he was a boy in the English missionary school.

If Burmese ministers rose rapidly, their fall might be as sudden. When King Tharawadi succeeded, he made his predecessor's ministers work as slaves on the road for a time, and when this exercise had quite worn them out, put them to death. When King Mindon Min heard in 1874, that Disraeli was to be Prime Minister, he sighed and said: "Then poor Gal-sa-tony (Gladstone) is in prison, I suppose."

Mindon Min was a strict Buddhist, and made a special boast that never in all his reign had he ordered an execution; but sudden deaths were not uncommon. When an official displeased him in some way, he would say, "I don't want to see that man any more." The poor wretch left the royal presence to be seized by executioners outside, and killed more or less rapidly. A day or two afterwards his Majesty would ask where so-and-so was. "Alas! sire," was the answer, "he died of grief

shortly after the lord of earth and ocean cast eyes of displeasure on him."

Tharawadi, Theebaw's grandfather, had a spear which he threw at those who offended him. Theebaw, on his accession, got out this spear, and used it occasionally; but it is not recorded that he ever actually killed anybody with his own hands.

The capitation or income tax was the chief source of revenue. The rate varied from 6 to 10 rupees a year for each household. Next in order was the tax on agriculture. Taxes were usually farmed out to persons, who made their collection a pretence for plunder and extortion.

The capitation tax was continued by the British Government in Lower Burma, as the people were accustomed to pay it, and disliked new taxes. It is levied on all males between the ages of 18 and 60, at the rate of Rs. 5 a head for married men, and half that amount for bachelors. Persons unable to earn their own living and some others, are exempted.

Under Burmese rule there were minute regulations, guarded with the most jealous care, about houses, dress, and ornaments, breaches of which led to extortion.

The laws about houses have already been mentioned. Umbrellas must be of a certain size, colour, and number. A white umbrella belonged to the king alone, and he had nine of them. A gilt umbrella was given as a special favour to the highest officers and royal princes. Distinguished statesmen and generals might have several gilt umbrellas, which were duly displayed on all public occasions, and were put up in the house in prominent places. Officials about the palace had their umbrellas painted black inside; some had permission to cover them with silk; others, more honoured, might have a fringe. Umbrellas owned by poor people must be short in the handle, small in size, and of the natural colour. New regulations were sometimes issued



about umbrellas, and district officials made large sums in the way of fines for their breach. Englishmen, unacquainted with the rules, sometimes got themselves into serious trouble at Mandalay by carrying an umbrella with a white cotton cover. The offence was high treason, and the punishment death.

The metal, size, and construction of spittoons, betel-boxes, cups, and other household furniture for different grades, were rigidly marked. Anklets of gold were forbidden to all children, but those of the royal family on pain of death. Silk cloth, ornamented with gold or silver flowers and figures of animals, might be worn by none but the royal blood, and such as received a special grace enabling them to use it. Representations of peacocks were for personages of royal blood. Hundreds more instances might be given of similar rules.

Minute regulations of the above character, like the caste customs of India, indicate a low stage of intellectual development. Enlightened men do not attach importance to such trifles; they are only for children.

## RELIGIONS.

The two religions of the Burmese are *Nat Worship* and *Buddhism*. The latter is the professed religion, but the former has a far stronger hold upon most of the people. Each will be described in turn.

### NAT WORSHIP, OR DEMONOLATRY.

Throughout the whole of Eastern Asia, the worship of demons, or evil spirits, is so deeply rooted in the minds of the wild and half-civilised tribes, that it has been, to a great extent, retained by the nations which have adopted Buddhism as their national creed.

Some suppose the word *nat* to be derived from the Sanskrit *nath*, meaning 'lord,' but this is not yet decided. It is applied in Burma both to the *devas*, or inferior gods, and to demons. The king of the *devas* is supposed to come down to earth at the beginning of the Burmese year, and to remain here for three days. The *devas*, however, are little regarded. It is the malevolent spirits who receive daily attention.

The Karens and other wild tribes suppose that all nature is peopled with nats: every tree and stem and post has its spirit. Many of them are supposed to dwell in trees. The idea seems to be that they require protection from the weather like human beings, and betake themselves to trees as convenient and agreeable places of shelter. Some wander to and fro, and go up and down in uninhabited wastes; some skulk in shady retreats. Sometimes they take up their abodes in houses; one of them may take a fancy to inhabit the body of a votary.

Many of the demons are supposed to have originally been human beings, especially those who met with a sudden or violent death, and had been dreaded in their lifetime. The nats are regarded as beings who must be looked up to with fear and propitiated by regular offerings. The people do not want to have anything to do with the nats; all they seek is to be let alone. The bamboo pipes containing arrack, the bones of sacrificial animals, the hatchets, swords, spears, bow and arrows that line the way to a Kachin village, are placed there, not with the idea of attracting the spirits, but of preventing them from coming right among the houses in search of their requirements. If they want to drink, the arrack has been poured out, and the bamboo pipe is there in evidence of the libation; the blood-stained skulls of oxen, pigs, and the feathers of fowls show



that there has been no stint of meat offerings; should the nats wax quarrelsome and wish to fight; there are the axes and swords with which to commence the fray. Only let them be grateful, and leave their trembling worshippers in peace and quietness.

At the extremity of every village, there is a shrine for the nat or nats in the neighbourhood. This varies much in size and

character. Sometimes it is a mere bamboo cage, hung on a pipal or other tree, or slung on a post, a bird-cage kind of construction, with an image inside, and a little hole through which the superstitious can introduce their offerings,—tiny water-pots, oil-lamps, and little morsels of food. Often, if the village is larger, the shrine is much more pretentious. There is a large roof, gabled, and supported with red posts, the platform ornamented with ■ raised seat at one end, on which a representation of the nat is placed at the feast time, which, in imitation of the pagoda feast, occurs at a regular fixed season. At other times these images are kept stowed away in an adjoining chamber, built for the purpose.

The picture is a Sinhalese representation of a demon supposed to cause pestilence.

Each person is supposed to have his nat. The house has also a guardian nat. For his comfort the tops of all the posts of the house are covered with a hood of white cotton cloth, for it is in this situation that he usually takes up his abode. In almost every house at the end of the verandah in front, there is a water-pot, full of water, over which certain spells have been uttered by the astrologer or priest of the district. This water, which is replenished once a month or oftener in cases of danger from disease or when a member of the family is absent on a journey, is every now and then sprinkled about the house as a protection against evil spirits. When the rains are over, offerings of money, rice, eggs, jaggery, and fruits are made that the nat may keep away fever from the household. It must not be supposed that the nat has necessarily any affection for those who have built the place where he has taken up his abode. He probably regards them only with

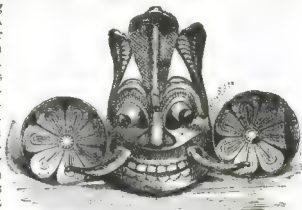


A CEYLONSE PICTURE OF A DEMON TO FRIGHTEN THE IGNORANT.

cold indifference, however generous they may be in their offerings, and were he not propitiated by these gifts, he would almost certainly display his anger by doing the inhabitants some grievous injury.

Beyond the demon of the house, there is the guardian nat of the village. None of the lower class Talangs would ever think of eating a morsel without first holding up his platter in the air, and breathing out a prayer to the village nat. A feast must be held every three or four years in honour of this nat, at which a woman, called the nat's wife, dances. This is done in order that sickness may be kept away. Should an epidemic actually break out, a very elaborate ceremony is gone through. Probably first of all the figure of the demon is painted on an ordinary earthenware water-pot, and this is solemnly smashed to pieces about sun-down with a heavy stick. As soon as it gets dark, the entire populace break out into yells, and make as much noise generally as they can compass, with the view of scaring away the evil spirit who has brought the disease. This is repeated on three several nights, and if it is not effective the monks are called in to give their assistance. The head of the kyoung, with his followings, repeat the Ten precepts and chant one of the sermons of the Lord Buddha, the same by the preaching of which he drove away the pestilence which was devastating the country of Waythalee. If this last ceremony is not effectual, the village is abandoned for a time. Before they return again, the yellow-robed monks, in recognition of much alms, read the Law up and down the street between the houses. When they have gone back to the monastery, the nat's shrine is repaired, and abundant offerings deposited. The people then enter upon their ordinary pursuits as if no interruption whatever had occurred.

When a leading man in a hamlet is sick or more often when there is a contagious disease, a great feast of cooked rice and roasted fowls is heaped up on a platform specially erected for the purpose some distance outside the village. Every one in the place is required to have some part in the ceremony. Some dress themselves in a fantastic way and pretend to be demons.



A MASK USED IN DEVIL CEREMONIES IN CEYLON.

Others feign to be dogs and rush about on all fours, barking and howling; others represent pigs, and grunt and poke about with their noses in the ground. After a certain time, the villagers come out in a band and, through one or more spokesmen, demand of the possessed whether those lying sick at home will recover, and whether the evil spirits are pleased with the offerings.

Some nats are celebrated far and wide. One lives in the water and causes death. Another is a great drunkard, to whom arrack, in large quantities, is offered. A third nat lives in jungles, and shakes those he meets so that they get mad; a fourth flies about in the clouds to spy out men whom he may snap up.

When a Burmese starts on a journey he

hangs a bunch of plantains on the pole of the buffalo cart or the stem of the boat, to conciliate any spirit whose beat he may intrude upon. The fisherman makes offerings every time he launches his canoe; the lonely hunter in the forest deposits some rice and ties together a few leaves whenever he comes across some large and imposing tree, lest there be a nat dwelling there.

There are abundance of experts who profess to be able to explain signs and to control the evil spirits. Every district possesses its spirit-woman who dances at the nat feasts, and at ordinary times is consulted by the superstitious on all kinds of subjects connected with their trade. She is asked where so-and-so lately deceased is, to which world he has migrated; where absent persons are and what they are doing, &c. There are men who claim similar knowledge, and are equally abundant. When a Burmese is dying a Buddhist priest is sometimes sent for, not to give advice or comfort, but by his presence to drive away demons.

The Burmese call themselves Buddhists, and profess to take refuge in Buddha, his Law, and his Assembly; but their real "threefold refuge" are astrology, charms, and demon worship. Buddhism teaches that things happen according to *karma*, or deeds in a former birth, not on account of charms and demons. Its sacred books condemn divinations, charms, &c., as "low arts and lying practices;" yet Burmese, from the highest to the lowest, privately and publicly indulge in nat worship.

**Duty of Educated Burmese.**—Demon worship is the superstition of savages. Its prevalence in Burma shows the low stage of civilization to which the people have yet reached. Intelligent Burmese should seek to show their ignorant neighbours the uselessness, folly, sin, and danger of nat worship, as well as tell them what to do in

cases of sickness. These may be explained as follows:

1. *There are no such beings as the nats worshipped in Burma.*—They exist only in the imagination of the ignorant.

2. *The ceremonies employed cannot cure disease, and sometimes make it worse.*—Bad water, insufficient clothing, exposure to the night air, and the changes of the seasons, are some of the chief causes of fever; bad food, of diarrhoea. Filth has been called the "mother of sickness." Offerings to demons have no effect upon these. The ceremonies often take place at night, and last a long time. The body is then weakest and the causes of disease strongest; so that harm is done by the exposure.

3. *Demon worship is morally degrading.*—There is a Sanskrit proverb; "As is the god, so is the worshipper." We tend to become like those we worship. Demons are supposed to be malicious beings, delighting to injure others. Their worship fosters evil passions.

4. *Demon worship is sinful and dangerous.*—God is the Creator and rightful Lord of this world. He first gave us life; He keeps us in life; we live on His earth; everything we have belongs to Him. He justly claims our obedience. But demon-worshippers disregard His commands, and honour evil spirits instead of Himself. They deserve severe punishment.

*Safeguards against Sickness.*—The chief causes of disease have been mentioned. Health is therefore to be preserved, not by charms and nat worship, but by good water, pure air, wholesome food, proper clothing, cleanliness, and care about the seasons. Vaccination preserves from small-pox.

Special attention to health is necessary at certain times.

After floods in the large rivers have gone down, fever prevails. One great cause is bad water from decaying vegetation. Much care should be taken to get good water.



Boiling drinking water is a great safeguard, killing the poison which causes fever. Exposure to the night air and draughts should be avoided. People should sleep under shelter, and not in the open air. Cots are better than lying on the ground. Some food should be taken before going out in the morning.

In cases of sickness, a good doctor should be consulted—not those who recommend nat worship.

By the above means the people would be freed from constant groundless fears, rendering them much happier; while they would be saved from much sickness and sin against God.

er of Buddhism, claimed to be omniscient, or to know all things. The religion which he established has many followers in Ceylon and Eastern Asia. It is a proud attempt to create a faith without a God, and in which man is his own saviour.

The time when Buddha lived is uncertain. His birth-place was Kapilavastu, a town about 100 miles north of Benares. His father, Siddhodana, was ruler of the Sakya tribe. His mother, Maya, was childless till her 45th year.

Most wonderful stories are told of the birth of Buddha. According to Burmese accounts, he entered his mother's womb in the form of a white elephant. At his birth he took seven steps forward, a lotus spring-



IMAGE OF BUDDHA IN JAPAN, ABOUT 32 CUBITS IN HEIGHT.

## BUDDHISM.

### HISTORY OF BUDDHA.

The word Buddha comes from *Budh*, to know. Gautama (Gotamo, Pali), the found-

ing up at each step, and said with a loud voice, "I am the most exalted in the world, I am the chief of the world; hereafter there is to me no other birth." The 10,000 Sakwalas trembled; flowers were

showered from the sky—even the whole surface of the ocean was covered with them.

On the fifth day he was called Siddhartha. His family name was Gautama. In his 16th year he was married to Yasodhara, the daughter of the king of Koli. Till his 29th year, he lived in the full enjoyment of every kind of pleasure. A deva then appeared to him successively as an old man, broken and decrepit, as a man parched with fever, and as a dead body. Upon these sights Gautama said, "Woe to youth which must be destroyed by old age! Woe to health, which must be destroyed by so many diseases! Woe to this life, where man remains so short a time! If there was no old age, no disease, no death; if these could be made captive for ever!"

Lastly, the prince saw the deva as a mendicant, showing much inward peace. The same day Yasodhara gave birth to a son, called Rahula; but that night he determined to give up everything that he might discover for himself and for the world the way of salvation from sorrow.

Gautama commenced by studying all that the Brahmins could teach him; but he found their doctrines unsatisfactory. For six years he then gave himself to severe penances, till he was supposed to be dead. On recovering, he thought that asceticism was not the way of arriving at the truth. To regain his strength, he again went from place to place, with the alms bowl, and partook of food.

After very long deep thought, Gautama arrived at the following conclusions: if we were not born, we should not be subject to old age, misery, and death; therefore the cause of these evils is birth. But whence comes birth as continued existence? Ignorance, he supposed, was the ultimate cause of existence, and therefore with the removal of ignorance, existence and all its miseries would be cut off at their source.

Passing through successive stages of contemplation, Gautama claimed at last to have attained Buddhahood. He then went about for 45 years, making known his doctrines, and gradually gaining disciples. When 80 years of age, he died at Kusinagara in Oudh, his end having been hastened by a meal of pork prepared for him by a goldsmith. After his body was burnt, the remaining bones were distributed. Most of them were enclosed in solid buildings which will afterwards be described; but in Ceylon what is said to be his right canine tooth is preserved in a temple at Kandy.



SUPPOSED TOOTH OF BUDDHA.

**Spread of Buddhism.**—Three great councils were held after Buddha's death. The third took place at Pataliputra, now Patna, on the Ganges, during the reign of Asoka, king of Magadha, about 250 B. C. At its close Buddhist missionaries were sent to different countries. Mahinda, son of Asoka, with six persons, was appointed to introduce Buddhism into Ceylon. Others went to China about 70 years before Christ. From China, the religion was carried to Japan.

The most sacred books of the Buddhists are called the *Tri-Pitaka*, the "Three Baskets." They were handed down orally for a long time. It is not known exactly when they were first written in India. Mahinda, before coming to Ceylon, spent three years in committing them to memory. The text is said to have been first written in Ceylon about 90 B. C., or 453 years after the death of Buddha. According to Burmese

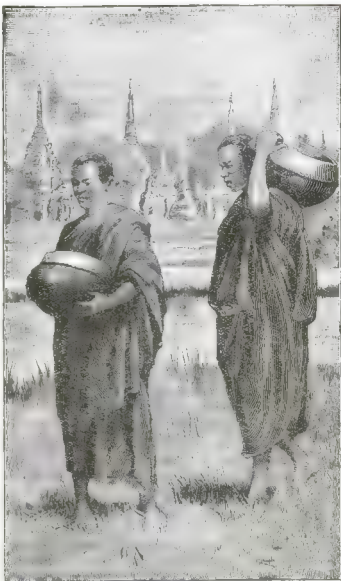
annals, Buddhagosa, "The Voice of Buddha," a distinguished scholar brought from Ceylon to Burma a copy of the Buddhist scriptures at the end of the fourth century of the Christian era. But the Burmese maintain that they were followers of Buddha long before that epoch. They may have embraced the doctrines about the same time as the Chinese. The religion is supposed to have been carried to Siam about two centuries later.

#### BUDDHIST MONKS.

It has already been mentioned that nearly every male Burmese puts on the yellow robes, though it may be only for a short time. Unless he does so, it is supposed that in his next birth he will not be higher than a brute beast. Persons who aspire ultimately to *nibban* or *nirwana*, become monks.

A candidate must have reached the age of 20 years and have obtained his parents' permission. His friends provide him with the eight articles which a monk cannot do without. These are three pieces of yellow cloth for dress, a begging bowl, suspended from the neck, a leathern girdle, a razor to shave his head and beard, a needle to stitch his clothes, and a water-strainer to prevent the destruction of the animal life.

There are five Buddhist commands con-



BUDDHIST MONKS RETURNING WITH FOOD COLLECTED.\*

sidered binding on all. 1. Not to take life.

• The bowls should be suspended from the necks.



2. Not to steal. 3. Not to commit adultery. 4. Not to tell lies. 5. Not to drink intoxicating liquors. Some take upon themselves three additional commands: 6. Not to eat after noon. 7. Not to attend dancing, stage plays, &c. 8. Not to use perfumes. Monks are bound to observe two more: 9. Not to use high beds or couches. 10. Not to receive gold or silver. This last command is often violated. Some monks receive money—covered with a handkerchief. Others will tell their pupils to take the coin and put it in a box.

In the early morning in all the towns and villages of Burma are to be seen rows of monks, walking slowly along the streets, with their alms-bowl slung round their necks, into which the people pour food as they pass. They are barefooted and have no covering for the head. In the right-hand they carry a large palm-leaf fan, which they hold before their face in the presence of women, so that no evil thought may enter the mind. They are forbidden to ask for food, to look to the right or to the left; and they may not enter or loiter about the doors of houses. Gautama said: "The wise priest never asks for anything; it is a proper object for which he carries the alms-bowl; and this is his only mode of solicitation." When anything is poured into their bowls, they do not return thanks, but content themselves by saying, "Well, well." When sufficient has been obtained to appease their hunger, they return to the monasteries to eat it.

Many Burmese consider it a great act of merit to make a vow never to partake of a meal without reserving a portion of it for the monks. Nothing whatever should be cooked in monasteries. The hours during which food can be eaten are only between sunrise and noon.

The duties of the monks are not heavy. They generally lead a lazy life. Occasionally they read the sacred books on a feast-

day or go to a funeral that the pious may have an opportunity of giving them presents, and so lay up a good store of merit for future births. It is chiefly as teachers of the young that they deserve the support of the people.

Buddha claimed to be the greatest of beings, and the monks are supposed to be his representatives, entitled to the same honour. They do not show any respect even to a king. In Upper Burma, all make obeisance when they pass, and the women kneel down on each side of the road.

Great honours are also paid to distinguished monks after death. As soon as a monk expires, his body is opened, the bowels taken out, and the body embalmed; after which the corpse is closely swathed with cloth bandages, and covered over with a thick coat of varnish. It is then placed between two solid pieces of wood, hollowed out for the purpose, and boiling resin poured into the interstices until every crevice is filled. When this is completed, the coffin is gilded and placed on a platform under a handsomely decorated canopy, in one of the rooms of the monastery, or in a separate building, and there lies in state until preparations are completed for the cremation, which often extend over some months.

If the monastery is near a large town, 16 or 20 of the most beautiful young women are chosen from some of the best families of each division of the place, and taught to perform in honour of the funeral a slow graceful dance accompanied with a song. The dancers are arranged in parties of four; each of which performs separately at intervals, and has its own music and song. An equal number of young men are similarly selected, and go through the performances in like manner. The day before the ceremony, when all are supposed to be thoroughly proficient, they proceed in procession through the town, dressed in



their gayest attire, to the houses of the different heads of the community, and rehearse their performances for the following day.

On the morning of the funeral, the coffin is taken from its platform and deposited inside a lofty bier, placed upon a large car with four or more wheels, and drawn by bullocks to the cemetery. Arriving there, the bullocks are taken out, and ropes fixed to the front and back of the car which are quickly seized by a number of men,—one party pulling the car in the direction of the monastery where the deceased lived, and the other towards the centre of the cemetery. The car, creaking and shaking, moves slowly backwards and forwards, until, at last, with shouts of delight, the stronger party carries it off.

The frontispiece represents an enormous elephant, made of bamboo and covered with paper, which was employed in Mandalay to convey to the burning ground the remains of a distinguished Phungyi or monk. It was about 80 feet high.

When the bier reaches the centre of the cemetery, heaps of inflammable matter are piled up about it, and the body is speedily consumed.

When the Phungyi is well known, all the villages in the neighbourhood contribute towards the expenses of the ceremonies, which last a week or more. Ornamental cars, or gigantic figures of men, women, elephants, dragons, and other grotesque forms are sent. These are seized by the men who vigorously dance about with them, to the accompaniment of music and singing. Other amusements are provided for the crowd—wrestling matches, pony races, puppet shows, and dramatic performances go on all through the night.

Such sports at a funeral show the want of seriousness of the Burmese character.

## BUDDHIST BUILDINGS.

These are of three principal kinds:

**Kyongs.**—As already mentioned, these are the monasteries in which the monks live. Ordinarily they are built of teak, though in many places brick buildings are being erected, notwithstanding the prejudice that exists against them from their greater liability to damage in the case of earthquakes. The shape is always oblong, and the inhabited portion of wooden buildings is raised on posts or pillars 8 or 10 feet above the ground. They are, like all the other houses in the country, never more than one story high, for it is an indignity to have anyone over a person's head—especially in the case of a monk. The space between the ground and the floor is never used except by school boys and a few pariah dogs. A flight of steps of stone or wood leads up to the verandah.

The building has tier upon tier of massive roofs, giving the appearance of many stories when there is actually but one. This style of roofing was allowed only for religious buildings, for the royal palaces, and for the houses as a special favour of a few high officials. The ends of the gables are adorned with pinnacles, each with a curious wooden flag at the top, and crowned with an umbrella, called a *htee*, gilt and furnished with bells, the whole being elaborately carved.

The area of the large compound in which the monastery stands is enclosed by a high fence. All within is sacred ground, and even a prince, when he arrives on an elephant, must dismount at the gate, and come in reverently barefooted.

The majority of kyongs are plain teak wood or brick and lime structures, with more or less carving and decorations. The gorgeous buildings of this kind are at Mandalay. The Royal Monastery is the most striking collection of edifices of their



kind to be seen in the world. Every building is magnificent; the whole ablaze with gold leaf and fragments of looking glass, embedded in a resinous gum, while the zinc roofs glisten like silver in the sun, and the bells on the gable spires tinkle melodiously to every breeze. The huge posts are gilt all over or covered with red lacquer; the eaves and gables represent all kinds of fantastic and grotesque figures.

**Pagodas.**—This word is more correctly *dagaba*, derived from the Sanskrit *dhatu*

a heap of rice. The relics are placed in the centre. Miniature pagodas and monasteries in silver and gold, precious stones, &c., are also enclosed. A gold image of Buddha, with the hooded snake raising itself over him, is never wanting.

In Lower Burma the pagodas are all solid pyramidal cones, rising with a gradual diminishing rounded outline, and surmounted by a htee or umbrella spire, formed of concentric rings, lessening to a rod with a small vane of the top. They are



PAGODAS.

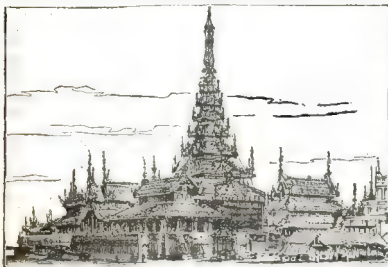
*garba*, a relic shrine. It is properly applied only to monuments raised over some of the supposed remains of Buddha or articles belonging to him. The word pagoda is not known to the Burmese. Such a building is called a *Zaydee*.

Zaydees are of many shapes. The monks say that Buddha left no instructions regarding them, except that a small mound should be raised over his bones in the form of

almost without exception erected on more or less elevated platforms.

The great Pagoda of Rangoon is the most celebrated shrine in all the Indo-Chinese countries. Pilgrims come to it, not only from the farthest parts of Burma, but from Siam, Cambodia and Corea. It rises to the height of 370 feet.

**Temples.**—These are sometimes called Pagodas, but properly they are only temples



THE INCOMPARABLE PAGODA, MANDALAY. (BURNT.)

containing images of Buddha or sacred books. The most celebrated in Burma is the great "Arakan Pagoda" of Mandalay. It contains a brass image of Buddha, represented sitting, which it is said was brought over from Akyab, in the year 1784 A. D. The shrine in which it stands is one of the most splendid in the country. The image itself is covered with a great seven-roofed canopy, with goodly pillars, the ceiling gorgeous with mosaics. Long colonnades, supported on 252 massive pillars, all richly carved and gilt, lead up to it. All day long circles of constantly renewed worshippers chant aloud the praises of Buddha, and the air is heavy with the effluvia of candles and the odours from thousands of smouldering incense sticks.

Images of Buddha represent him in three principal attitudes,—standing, sitting cross-legged, and reclining. As already mentioned, they are made of white marble, in large numbers, to the north of Mandalay.

Sir Monier Williams says: "It was indeed by a strange irony of fate that the man who denied any god or any being higher

than himself, and told his followers to look to themselves alone for salvation, should have been not only deified and worshipped, but represented by more images than any other being ever idolized in any part of the world . . . . Not only are isolated images manufactured out of all kinds of materials, but rows on rows are sculptured in relief, and the greater the number the greater religious merit."

## BELLS.

The Burmese are remarkable for their love of bells. Every large pagoda has some dozens of them of all sizes. One or two were put up with the central shrine itself; others have been added at various times as offerings.

The bells are not intended, as in Christian countries, to summon worshippers to their devotions. Their use is to direct attention to the fact of the praise of Buddha having been recited. The worshipper, when he has finished, goes to one of the bells and strikes it three times, to bring to the notice of the guardian spirits and the four worlds what he has been doing. There are always a number of deer's antlers and billets of wood lying near the bell for this purpose.

The Burmese bells are not handsome in shape. They come straight down to the mouth like a barrel, not expanding at the rim, but their tone is sweet. Some of them are very large.

## PAGODA FEASTS.

The pleasure-loving Burmese make their religious feasts more a source of enjoyment than anything else. Youths and girls look forward to them as seasons of mirth and flirtation; long nights at the open air theatre, feasting, and perpetual amusements, the pleasanter because lasting no more than two days. Elderly people like them because they meet their old friends and receive and recount the gossip of half a dozen districts. It is a joyous holiday; sanctified by the thought that the few hours spent at the pagoda gather up stores of merit.

## BUDDHIST WORSHIP.

The worshippers, if men, sit on their heels. The body is bent forward, and the hands are joined together and raised to the forehead. The women kneel down together, and take special care to cover their feet. All are barefooted. Before commencing the repetition of the formulae, three prostrations are made with the forehead to the ground, and the same is repeated at the close. On rising to depart, the worshipper turns to the right. It is usual to hold some offering between the hands during the ceremony—a prayer-flag, a flower, or something of the kind—and this is afterwards reverently deposited on the altar.

The Buddhists do not pray in the strict sense of the word: Buddha is supposed to have entered nirwana, and no longer exists. Many only repeat the formula:

I make Buddha my refuge;  
I make his Law my refuge;  
I make his Assembly my refuge.

To this is often added, "Change, pain, illusion," repeated on the rosary.

The following form, taught to the scholars in the kyongs, is sometimes retained through life:

"Awgatha, Awgatha, I worship with the body, with the mouth, and with the

mind, with these three kans. The first, the second, the third; once, twice, until three times. The Lord, the precious one; the Law, the precious one; the Assembly, the precious one; these three precious things. I, the worshipper, most humbly, with fervid zeal, with clasped hands, pay reverence; give offerings, and with pious gaze bow me down. Thus by this worshipping I gain merit and increase in earnestness and purity of heart, and am freed from the Four States of Punishment; from the Three Evil Things, starvation, plague, and war; from the Eight Chambers of Hell; and from the Five Enemies. And at the end, when the last existence has come for me, may I pass into Nibban."

It is common for the pious at every period of the day to repeat their devotions simply in the direction of the pagoda, and often from a spot where hardly even the summit of it can be seen.

It is a work of merit to go about lighting tapers and candles which have been blown out, or lamps which have got choked up, watering flowers, and so on.

The prayer-flags are made of paper cut fancifully into figures of dragons, lizards, and the like, with embroidery work round the edges. In the centre is written some pious reflection or aspiration, and the offerer places it on the shrine. The following are samples of inscriptions:

"By means of this paper the offerer will become very strong."

"By the merit of this paper Wednesday's children will be blessed by spirits and men."

"May the man born on Friday gain reward for his pious offering."

"May the man born on Monday be freed from sickness and from the Three Calamities."

## THE LORD WHITE ELEPHANT.

The Kings of Burma and Siam considered their greatest glory to be the possession of white elephants. This idea arose from



the legend that Gautama, in his last birth, entered his mother's womb in that form. A white elephant is to be a future Buddha. The Irawadi is named from Airawata, the elephant of Indra. Hence the reverence of the Hindus for the white elephant, and their pilgrimages to Mandalay to have a *darsan*, or interview of worship with him.

The so-called white elephants are not pure white. Most are of a grey colour, like the pale spots to be found on the trunk of almost every ordinary elephant. Some are reddish or spotted. The Burmese have two tests. One is that the elephant shall have five toe-nails on his hind feet instead of four, though occasionally black elephants have the sacred number of toes. The other test is more decisive. If water is poured upon a "white" elephant, he turns red, while a black elephant only becomes blacker than ever.

The differences in the colour of human beings arise from a colouring matter in the skin. Occasionally it is colourless in the skins of persons whose parents are dark. Such have also a circle of red in the eye, and are called *albinos*, from a word meaning white. The white elephants are *albinos*.

The last Lord White Elephant at Mandalay, when young, was suckled by women, who stood in a long row outside his palace, waiting for the honour. A hundred soldiers guarded him, and the king himself made offerings, and paid him reverence. He had an establishment of 30 men to wait on him, among them a Minister of State who managed his affairs, and looked after the revenues of the province assigned to him for support. He was every day bathed with scented sandal water, and all his vessels and utensils were made of gold. Palace nautch girls danced for his pleasure, and sweet-voiced singers lulled him to sleep.

The white elephant was bad tempered, and his attendants were much afraid of

him. He once killed a man who ventured too near, and there was a good deal of trouble before the body could be got away from him. When the King, Theebaw's father, heard of it he felt great concern for the future state of the Lord White Elephant, with the red stain of murder upon him, blotting out hosts of previous good deeds. But the elephant's minister calmed his mind by saying, "It was not a man, only a foreigner."

The white elephant is king of elephants, and therefore none but a king can mount him. His trappings were magnificent, richly embroidered with gold, and studded with precious stones. On the forehead was a plate of gold recording his majesty's titles. When he went forth to take the air, he was shaded by golden and white umbrellas. The people made humble obeisance to him when he passed through the streets, which were swept and sprinkled with water for him as for the king himself.

The last Lord White Elephant has "departed," and his reign in Burma has ceased for ever.

#### EXAMINATION OF BUDDHISM.

There is no doubt that Gautama was a benevolent man, who wished to benefit the human race. Many of the precepts ascribed to him are excellent, but mixed with them there are monstrous fables and gross errors. Gautama did not write anything himself, and the present Tripitaka was not written till about 450 years after his death. It is impossible to tell what Buddha actually taught. While he was living, it is said that Raja Bimbisara said to him, "Who or what are you? Are you a god, or a Naga, or Brahma, or Sakra, or a man or a spirit?" Bodhisat answered truthfully, "Maharaja, I am no god or spirit, but a plain man seeking for rest, and so am practising the rules of an ascetic life."

The earlier Buddhist books are comparatively free from extravagancies. They become more and more marvellous, with the lapse of time. But even the earliest of them disprove Buddhism as taught at present.

Buddha claimed to be the greatest of all beings, chiefly because he supposed himself to know all things—past, present, and to come. He says, "I am all-knowing." Let his knowledge be tested.

Buddha declares that Maha Meru, or Mienmo, is 84,000 yoduns (each about 16 miles) above the great sea, and as many below it. The earth is known to be only about 8,000 miles in diameter. There is no room, therefore, for such a rock: it does not exist.

Buddha, like the Hindus of his day, supposed eclipses of the sun and moon to be caused by the Asur Rahu. In one of the Buddhist sacred books, it is said that the moon-god was seized by Rahu. Then the moon-god sought refuge in Buddha, who ordered Rahu to release the moon. The same is said of the sun.

Instead of Buddha being all-wise, he had not the knowledge of geography and astronomy possessed by an ordinary English school boy.

It is said that the first words Buddha spoke were: "I am the most exalted in the world; I am the chief of the world." If so, it shows that Buddha was one of the proudest men that ever lived, and pride, according to Buddhism, is one of the ten fetters. Buddha was only a man, to whom the eternal God, the Creator of all things, had given life. To claim to be greater than He, was unbounded pride.

The sum of Buddha's teaching is contained in what are called "Four Noble Truths":

1. Existence is suffering.
2. The desire of existence is the origin of suffering.

3. The destruction of this desire of existence is the destruction of suffering.

4. The eightfold path to the destruction of suffering.

As, according to Buddhism, existence is suffering, so the only way to get rid of suffering is to get rid of existence. Buddha annihilates suffering by annihilating life.

The following illustration will explain the nature of Buddha's four noble truths: A person is sick and suffering pain. A physician is called in. He says the sick man will suffer as long as he lives; he therefore recommends a large dose of opium, which will put an end to his sufferings by putting an end to his life.

Christianity, on the other hand, teaches that the destruction of sin is the destruction of suffering. In heaven, where there is no sin, there is perfect joy; in hell, where there is sin, there is perfect misery; in this world where sin and holiness are mixed, there is a mixture of sorrow and joy.

A dish of curry and rice may be composed of good materials; but if some poison is mixed with it, it will cause the death of those by whom it is eaten. In like manner, though part of Buddha's teaching is good, there are mixed with it some deadly errors. A few of them will now be mentioned.

1. **Denial of a Creator.**—Buddha did not expressly say that there is no Creator; but he implied it when he claimed to be the greatest being in the universe. It is also involved in his assertion that there is no eternal being.

The first duty of a child is to honour its parents; our first duty is to love and honour our Creator; but among all Buddha's teaching there is not a word to this effect. He teaches men to neglect the first and great commandment, exposing them to severe punishment.

2. **Denial of a Saviour.**—Some of Buddha's last words were, "Be your own refuge;" "Look not for refuge to any one be-

sides yourselves." Buddhism does not teach men to pray. Buddhists, it is true, say, "I make Buddha my refuge," but this is not prayer. According to Buddhism, it is of no use to pray. All things are determined by merit and demerit, which are unalterable. A man must suffer for his sins; there is no pardon.

Buddhists say, "I make the Law my refuge;" but the books are full of error. Properly speaking, the books are not a refuge to Buddhists; but they are a refuge to the books. Without their help, they would soon be destroyed by insects, &c.

Nor are the Assembly a refuge. Monks are weak, liable to disease, subject to passion as other men. Some of them are ignorant; others are immoral; many are covetous.

Christians make the eternal God, their Creator and Father in heaven, their refuge. It is true that they have been disobedient children; but He invites them to turn to Him with true sorrow, confessing their sin. He has provided for them a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom pardon can be obtained. He also promises to send them His Holy Spirit to purify their hearts, and fit them for dwelling for ever in His heavenly palace.

Let the Burmese accept this glorious

faith and they will be delivered from all fear of nats, and instead of saying, with Buddha, that existence is suffering, they will say, existence is happiness, begun in this life and perfected in heaven.



JUDSON, THE "APOSTLE OF BURMA."

#### PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY IN BURMA.

Roman Catholic Missionaries came to Burma about 1722 A.D. In 1886, Burmese Roman Catholic Christians were estimated

to number 27,000. Bishop Bigandet, who has been many years in Burma, is distinguished for his learning. The history of Roman Catholic Missions in Burma is not available. The following remarks refer only to Protestant Missions:

A son of the Rev. Dr. William Carey of Serampore laboured as a Missionary for a short time in Burma; but the founder of Protestant Christian Missions in that country was an American, named Adoniram Judson, a remarkable man who has well been called "The Apostle of Burma." Some account will be given of his life.

Judson was born in the United States in 1788. He was a precocious child. When he was three years old, his father went on a short journey. His mother wishing to give his father a pleasant surprise, taught the child to read during his absence. So rapidly did he learn, that when his father arrived he was able to read to him a chapter in the Bible!

Before he was twelve years of age, he had read with deep interest a very large number of books of various kinds. He entered College at sixteen. He was a hard student, and finished his course with much honour. But his mind was not at rest. He could not fix upon a profession or choose any path of life. At College he had formed a strong friendship with a very amiable and talented young man who was an unbeliever in Christianity, and Judson adopted his views.

When Judson was travelling, he stopped one night at a country inn. The landlord told him that he had to put him into a room next to that occupied by a young man likely to die, as he had no other sleeping place to give him. Judson said that it made no difference to him—only he was sorry for the poor young man. But it was a restless night to him. He was haunted by the questions, If he himself were in a similar position, was he ready to die?

Was the sick man a Christian, calm and strong in the hope of heaven, or was he trembling at the thought of a dark unknown future? Next morning he inquired about his fellow-lodger in the next room. "He is dead, sir," was the reply. "Do you know who he was?" Judson was completely stunned at learning that it was his old college friend. He returned home an earnest searcher after truth. Light gradually broke in upon his mind. He received Christ as his Saviour, and in December, 1808, he solemnly dedicated himself to God.

Judson entered a theological seminary to prepare for the Christian ministry. While there, he read an interesting book, *The Star in the East*, by Dr. Claudius Buchanan, who had been for many years a Chaplain in India. This led him to resolve to become a missionary to the East. On the 5th February 1812 he was married to Miss Ann Hasseltine, a remarkable woman, and on the 19th he embarked with her in a ship bound for Calcutta, where they arrived after a voyage of four months.

British India was then under the East India Company, which was opposed to missionaries coming to the country. Judson and his wife were ordered to return immediately to America, but afterwards they were allowed to go to the island of Mauritius. After many difficulties, they landed at Rangoon in June, 1813.

Their first work was learning the language. By-and-by Judson was able to preach, and began his public religious services in a small low building, surrounded by magnificent temples. In three years after his arrival in the country he completed a Grammar of the Burmese language, and the following year he finished the translation of the Gospel of Matthew.

In 1819, six years after coming to Rangoon, Judson baptized the first Burmese

convert, Moung Hau, who was soon followed by a few others. Some who were inclined to embrace Christianity were afraid of the consequences. They told Judson that he had better not stay in Rangoon and talk to common people; but go directly to the King, the "lord of life and death." If he approved of the religion, it would spread rapidly. Judson and another missionary therefore resolved to go to Ava, to try to obtain from the king in person toleration for the Christian religion.

By giving a valuable present to one of the king's ministers and another of less value to his wife, Judson and his companion obtained leave to "behold the golden face." They were taken to a splendid hall, completely covered with gold. The

king entered unattended, carrying in his hand the gold-sheathed sword. All prostrated themselves except the missionaries, who remained kneeling with their hands folded. The king then sat down on an elevated seat, his hand resting on the hilt of his sword. A petition was read asking that the American teachers might be free to preach, and that those who wished to listen might be free from molestation.

The king heard this petition, and stretched out his hand for it. One of the ministers crawled forward and presented it. After reading it, the king handed it back without saying a word. He also threw down a tract after reading one or two sentences. The minister thus interpreted his master's will: "In regard to the



JUDSON ARRESTED.

object of your petition, his majesty gives no order." Judson returned to Rangoon, disheartened by the failure of his visit.

In 1822, Judson had to go to Ava as interpreter to Dr. Price, a medical missionary, who had been summoned to the king. He made a favourable impression on the king who granted him a plot of land on which to build a residence.

Early in 1824 Judson and his wife went to Ava, where he built a house on the land given by the King. War against the English had been declared, and all Europeans were in disfavour. On the 23rd March news came of the capture of Rangoon by the English. As the missionaries were suspected of acting as spies, on the 8th June, an officer, holding a black book, with a dozen Burmans, accompanied by one whose spotted face showed that he was an executioner, rushed into Judson's house. "Where is the teacher?" was the inquiry. When Judson presented himself, the officer said, "You are called by the king,"—a form of speech always used when about to arrest a criminal. The spotted man instantly seized Mr. Judson, threw him on the floor, and produced the small cord, the instrument of torture. Mrs. Judson caught his arm, "Stay," said she, "I will give you money." "Take her too," said the officer; "she is also a foreigner." Mrs. Judson begged that they would allow her to remain till further orders. The spotted face refused to take the silver and loosen the ropes.

For 21 months Judson had to endure the horrors of a loathsome oriental prison. For nine months he was confined in three pairs of fetters, for two months in five, for six months in one. The prison was a building about 40 feet long and 30 wide, and about 5 feet high. There was no ventilation except through the chinks in the boards, and upon the thin roof poured down the rays of a hot sun. In this room were confined 100 persons of both sexes

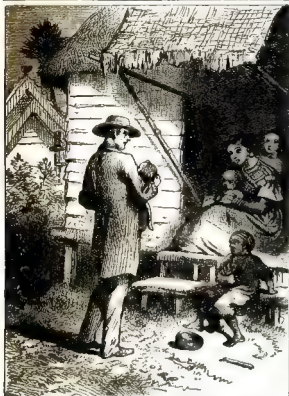
and all nationalities, nearly all naked and half famished. The prison was never washed nor even swept. Putrid remains of animal and vegetable matter, with filth, strewed the floor. In that place of torment Judson lay with 5 pairs of fetters on his legs and ankles, weighing about 7 seers, the marks of which he carried to his grave. At nightfall, lest the prisoners should escape, a bamboo pole was placed between their legs, and then drawn up by means of pulleys to a height which allowed their shoulders to rest on the ground, while their feet depended from the iron rings of their fetters.

Mrs. Judson had to go alone through the hot and crowded streets, exposed to insults, bringing food to her husband. She tried to lessen the wretchedness of the prisoners by bribing their inhuman keepers; she pleaded with one Burmese official after another for the release of her husband, and with such pathetic eloquence



MRS. JUDSON.





JUDSON BEGGING NOURISHMENT FOR HIS CHILD.

that she melted into tears the old governor of the prison. At last she fell sick of small-pox. To get milk for her baby, Judson, after many entreaties, was allowed to take about the little wailing child in his arms, begging nourishment for it from some Burmese mother.

At last, on the approach of the English army, Judson was released from his irons, and made to act as translator and interpreter for the Burmese in treating for peace. Again, however, he was thrown into prison, but he was soon released at the demand of General Campbell, who took Mr. and Mrs. Judson and their infant daughter to his own quarters, and treated them with the kindness of a father.

When Judson returned to Rangoon, the English wished to retain his valuable services as interpreter, and offered him a salary of 6,000 rupees; but he declined.

By the treaty of Yandaboo, the Tenasserim Provinces were ceded to the English. Judson removed there, as he would be able to teach Christianity unmolested. He first went to a new station, called Amherst, but afterwards removed to Moulmein, a more important place.

Judson had devoted much time and labour to the translation of the Bible into Burmese. The New Testament was completed in 1823. The manuscript was taken to Ava; and when Judson was thrown into prison, was secretly sewed up by his wife in a hard unsightly old pillow, so that it might not tempt the cupidity even of his jailers. At one time it came into the possession of one of the keepers, but finding it too hard, he threw it back, and it once more fell into Judson's hands. It was again lost, but was found by a Burmese convert who took it home as a memorial of his teacher.

Several months afterwards, the manuscript was found within uninjured. In 1834, the Old Testament was finished.

For 37 years Judson toiled in Burma, living successively at Rangoon, Ava, and Moulmein. He made numerous journeys, carrying everywhere the light of truth. In November 1849, he was seized with an attack of fever. A sea voyage was recommended, and he sailed for Mauritius. It was of no avail. On the 12th April 1850, he died on the way, and his body was committed to the deep.

#### CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE KARENS.

The Karens, as already mentioned, inhabit different parts of Burma. They were

formerly greatly oppressed by the Burmese. Karen mothers still the cries of their children by telling them, "A Burman is coming." The ancient sayings of their elders led them to expect deliverance. "Children and grand-children, as to the Karen nations, their God will yet save them." Help was expected to come from "white foreigners over the waters."



KARENS CARRYING SPICES.

The Karens are remarkable for believing in an eternal God, Creator of all things. One of their songs is as follows:

"God is eternal. His life is long—  
God is immortal. His life is long:  
One cycle He dies not,  
Two cycles He dies not,  
Perfect in great attributes,  
Age on age He dies not."

Up to 1829, the Karens were unknown as a separate nation. They were looked

upon as a mixed horde of aboriginal savages. The incident which first brought them into notice was a striking one. A Karen, called Ko Tha Byu, a debt slave to a Burman, had been set free by Dr. Judson, and employed as a water-carrier. Ko Tha Byu found a Christian tract one day as he was working in Dr. Judson's house. It was in the Burmese language, and he read it with difficulty.

At last, however, he mastered it, and its teachings struck him as singularly like the teachings of the god-traditions of his people. His eyes were opened; he discovered that at last the long-predicted return of God to his nation through the white man had been fulfilled. Fired with this knowledge, and overcome with joy at the glad tidings which he was now able to bring to his oppressed fellow-countrymen, he went forth as an apostle among the people, and laboured for a generation, proclaiming the restoration of the Karen nation and the return of God to them after centuries of expectation.\*

The following is an example of Ko Tha Byu's addresses:

"A worldly man is never satisfied with what he possesses. Let me have more lands, more buffaloes, more slaves, more clothes, more wives, more children, and grand-children, more gold and silver, more paddy and rice, more boats and vessels: let me be a rich man. Of God he is quite unmindful. But watch that man. On a sudden his breath departs. He looks around, and, astonished, exclaims--'Where are my slaves? where are my buffaloes? I cannot find one of them. Where are my houses and my chests of money, my rice and paddy, and all the fine clothes which cost me so much? I can find none of them. Who has taken them? And where are my wife and children? Ah! they are all miss-

\* Smeaton's *Loyal Karens of Burma*, pp. 192, 193.

ing: I can find none of them. I am lonely and poor, indeed. I have nothing. But what is this? Then, after describing the misery of the lost soul, he put into the man's mouth this closing lament: 'Oh! what a fool have I been! I neglected God, the only Saviour, and sought only worldly goods, while on earth; and now I am undone.' And he added: 'All in this world is misery. Sickness and pain, fear and anxiety, wars and slaughter, old age and death, abound on every hand. But hearken! God speaks from on high—' Children! why take ye delight, and seek happiness, in that low village of mortality—in that thicket of briars and thorns? Look up to me; I will deliver you, and give you rest, where you shall be for ever blessed and happy.'

In 1881, the number of Karen Christians was estimated at 64,000. Mr. Smeaton, a Bengal Civilian, who served in Burma, thus describes the effects of Christianity upon the Karens:

"Once a village has embraced Christianity, it feels itself a head and shoulder above its neighbours, and all the energies of the people are at once employed in making their village worthy of the name. No labour, no expenses are spared. The Christian village must be clean, healthy, neat; it must have the best school and the best church they can afford. Money aid from the Missionaries is not sought; the people do it all themselves—plan, contrive and carry out. They are proud of their new conditions, and their zeal knows no bounds. Their children must be well-dressed and educated, intelligent and industrious in their calling, better tillers of the soil, better hunters, better foresters than their fathers, because they are now animated by a new spirit, fired with a new zeal, and their wits are sharpened by education. The coming of Christianity has honoured their national traditions. A new life opens

out to them—a new career for which their forefathers had sighed in the ages of hardship and oppression and slavery."

It was stated in 1882, that among the Karens in the Bassein district, there was not a single pastor receiving foreign pay; not a single school that was not supporting its own teacher.

**Protestant Native Christians in Burma.**—In 1881 the total number of Protestant converts, mostly Karen, was 75,500, who contributed during the year Rs. 69,170 for the support of Pastors and Schools. There were 6 Theological and Training Schools, 26 Anglo-Vernacular Schools, and 248 Vernacular Schools. The number of pupils was 8,700.

## HISTORY.

The Burmese have a book called *Maha Raja Weng*, supposed to contain a history of their kings. It begins with an account of the first formation of the earth according to Buddhism, and the appearance thereon of the ancestors of the human race. The name *Brahma* is used in Buddhist books for the first inhabitants of the world. This name the Burmese have adopted for themselves.

The history then describes the small states of the *Sakya Rajas* in Northern India. It is asserted that long before the birth of Prince *Siddhartha*, destined to become *Buddha*, a chief of the *Sakya* clan came with an army to Burma, where he established himself and built a city called *Tagaung*. He is said to have had 32 descendants who reigned successively in that city.

As some Hindu *rajahs*, for the sake of greater honour, claim to be descended from *Rama*, so the Buddhist kings of Burma professed to belong to the *Sakya* race of *Gautama*.

The history of Burma, says *Fytche*, somewhat resembles that of India, without a

Muhammadian invasion. From the earliest times the country was divided into a number of petty kingdoms, almost constantly at war with one another. Sometimes one or other gained the mastery, and for a time was the paramount power. Every kingdom was liable to be overthrown at any moment by a rebellion from within or an invasion from without. In Burmese histories facts and fictions are so intermingled that it is impossible to arrive at the truth. With oriental exaggeration, armies are sometimes reckoned by millions; elephants by tens of thousands.

The chief contending powers were the Arakanese, the Peguans, or Talaings, the Burmese, and the Shans. The grandest remains in Burma are those of the once great and famous city of Pagan. In the 13th century, Kublai Khan, the Mongol emperor of China, demanded tribute from Burma. The Mongol ambassadors were insolent, and the Burmese king, against the remonstrance of his ministers, put them to death. The Mongols invaded Burma. The Burmese were defeated in a great battle; the king fled from Pagan, which the Mongols entered and plundered about 1284 A. D. The city, though deserted, still contains the remains of about a hundred buildings, some of them stupendous, and in a wonderful state of preservation after six centuries.

The most remarkable name in the modern history of Burma is that of Alaungpra, usually called Alompra by Europeans. From him the last Burmese dynasty was descended.

The original name of Alompra is unknown. He was of very humble origin, and was a hunter. According to Buddhism, there are 21 kinds of people who, on account of their evil deeds, will fall into the lowest hell. Nineteen, however, of these may repent; but the *fisherman* and *hunter*, let them attend pagodas, listen to

the Law, and keep the five commandments to the end of their lives, cannot be released from their sins.

Alompra, who was a man of bold and energetic character, first made himself head of his native village, about 60 miles north of Ava. After the Peguans had taken Ava, an officer was sent to the north to collect taxes. When Alompra was summoned to appear, he came with 40 armed men, attacked the Peguans, and slew them all. A stronger body was now sent against him; but he went out, met the enemy in the jungle, and defeated them with great loss. The hunter-captain was soon joined by numbers of his countrymen, and again defeated a Pegan force. At this time he probably adopted the name of Aungzeya, the Victorious.

The name *Alaungpra* was lastly assumed. It means one who is destined to become a Buddha. It is the equivalent of the Pali Bodhisatwa. It is said that one night, when Alompra was asleep, his arms suddenly shone out like fire, which some of his followers observing, awoke him by pouring water on him. Astrologers were sent for to explain the meaning of this luminous appearance, who declared it to denote that he would shortly become a king. This was, no doubt, a stratagem on the part of Alompra to give confidence to his followers.

The Burmese capital had fallen to the Peguans early in 1752 A. D. Within two months, this headman of a village had roused the spirit of his countrymen. A palace for him was built on the model of those erected by the ancient kings, and the whole Burmese people rallied to him whom they recognised as their native sovereign.

Towards the close of 1753, Alompra advanced with an army and a fleet of boats towards Ava. The Pegan commander abandoned the city by night, which was then occupied by Alompra. Within a few



years Alompra reduced the whole of Burma under his sway. He founded the city of Rangoon, and during his reign the British Government was first brought into communication with the kings of Burma.

In 1759 Alompra determined to invade Siam. A complaint was made that bands from that country had made inroads into Burmese territory. It is also stated that Alompra was incensed against the king of Siam, because he had refused to give him one of his daughters in marriage. After defeating the Siamese, Alompra took up a position before the capital Ayuthia. Five days later he was stricken by mortal disease. A retreat was then ordered. The sick king was carried in a litter; but when half way, he died in his 46th year. The body was conveyed to the capital, and burnt with the funeral rites of a Chakravarti, or universal monarch.

**First Burmese War with the English.**—The Burmese did not travel to other countries, and the kings were surrounded by flatterers who gave them the most extravagant ideas of their power. About the year 1822, the Burmese, after carrying their arms into Assam and Manipur, wished to measure their strength with their new neighbours, the English. British subjects were carried off, and a small body of British troops on the island of Shahpuri were attacked and several killed. To the repeated demands of the British for redress, no answer was returned, and in February 1824, war was declared by the English.

Sir Archibald Campbell, with an English force, entered the Irawadi River, and anchored off Rangoon on the 10th May, 1824. After a feeble resistance, this seaport surrendered. The Burmese used as defences, stockades, small forts made of wood. In June some of them were attacked by artillery. The shot and shell struck such terror into the Burmese, that at once they fled. They received large reinforce-

ments from Ava, but they were beaten on all points.

Meanwhile the British army suffered very much from disease. The Tennasserim Provinces were then taken, which afforded healthy stations for the sick.

Bandula, the most renowned general of the Burmese, had been trying to enter British territory from Arakan. He was recalled and sent with an army of 60,000 men to attack the British, who had only 5,000 efficient men. After repeated defeats, he had to retreat.

Sir Archibald Campbell then advanced on Prome, about 100 miles higher up the Irawadi. At Donabyu, Bandula was killed by the explosion of a bomb. Before the war began, the Burmese fully expected to conquer Bengal. After the dispersion of the army at Donabyu, they spread the most exaggerated rumours of the English. They declared that the white foreigners were demons, invincible and blood-thirsty; that Europeans kept advancing after their heads had been chopped off; that European doctors picked up arms and legs, and replaced them after the action.

During the course of the summer, the Burmese were expelled from Assam, and Arakan was taken by the English.

Sir Archibald Campbell continued to advance towards the capital. The Burmese made a final stand at the ancient city of Pagan, where they were again defeated. When the invading force was within four days' march from Ava, the American Missionaries, Judson and Price, who had been kept in cruel confinement for 21 months and often threatened with death, were sent down with Burmese officers of high rank to conclude what was called the treaty of Yandaboo on the 24th February 1826. The King of Burma agreed to pay a crore of rupees towards the expenses of the war, and to cede the provinces of Assam, Arakan, and the coast of Ten-



nasserim. The first instalment of 25 lakhs was paid immediately. Rangoon was held till the balance was paid towards the close of the year.

**Second Burmese War.**—For some years after the first war, the relations between the Burmese and English were peaceful. In 1837, the throne was usurped by Tharawadi, who showed the greatest hatred and contempt for the English. The British resident at Ava was not allowed even to see the king. Tharawadi's son inherited his father's spirit. Acts of violence were committed on British ships and seamen. Remonstrance was made by the British Government, but the officers sent were treated with indignity. Another Burmese war was the result, the first shot being fired in January, 1852. By the end of the year, the whole province of Pegu was, by proclamation of the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, declared to be annexed to the British Dominions. No treaty was obtained or insisted upon by the British Government. In 1855, the King of Burma sent a complimentary Mission to Calcutta to ask for the restoration of Pegu. Lord Dalhousie, pointing to the sun, said, "So long as the sun shines in the heavens, so long will the British flag wave over Pegu."

**Third Burmese War.**—In October, 1878, King Mindun Ming died, not without suspicions of having been poisoned. The King intended Prince Nyoung Yaun to be his successor, and did not own Theebaw as his son, because he was believed to be illegitimate. His mother, Mee-bayah, a Shan, had been imprisoned for many years on this account. Theebaw, from the age of 12, was educated at an English Mission School. He learned to speak and read English a little, and to play cricket. On leaving school he assumed the yellow robes, and was placed in a monastery. Theebaw was chosen by the favourite

wife of the late king as his successor. She had no son, and she wished Theebaw to marry her daughter, Supayalat, to which he consented.

When a Burmese king ascended the throne, the first thing he generally did was to murder all his brothers. This met with the approval of the Burmese, as it prevented rebellion. Theebaw's mother-in-law and wife carried out this policy with the assistance of the Tyndah—the officer in command of the troops. Theebaw himself did not know of it till afterwards. The late king's sons, with some of their wives and children, were removed to a gaol on Saturday night. Some were killed that night, and the rest on the two succeeding nights. Touching tales are told of how the women and children interceded for their lives in vain. Their outcries were stifled by the hands of the executioners grasping their necks till they were strangled. Others were killed with clubs. Of the princes, the eldest alone showed courage. He is said to have laughed, and said to his brothers: "See, I told you we should have no release but death." On Sunday night 8 cart-loads of the bodies of princes are said to have been taken and thrown into the river. The other bodies were thrown into a hole, dug in the gaol.

When the British Government remonstrated, the reply was that "the King of Burma, being an independent sovereign had a right to take all necessary measures to prevent disturbance in his dominions, without being subjected to the censure of others."

In August, 1879, the British Resident at Mandalay was withdrawn. Theebaw regarded this as a triumph. He might now act as he pleased without being told of his misconduct.

The Bombay-Burma Trading Company had a contract with the Burmese Government for the purchase of teak timber. It

was alleged that the Company had defrauded Government, and the Hlut-daw inflicted a fine of 23 lakhs. When the British Government proposed arbitration, the answer was that the Burmese Government could not set aside the decree of its own court.

But what mainly led to the war was Theebaw's seeking an alliance with the French Government, which would have given it great influence in Upper Burma. On the western frontier of India, the British Government had been obliged to incur great expense to protect it from Russian invasion. A similar outlay would be

An ultimatum was sent by the British Government to Theebaw, requiring him to receive a British Resident and to submit his foreign policy to the approval of the Government of India. Theebaw gave a verbal refusal. The English troops under General Prendergast, then advanced. Some little resistance was met with on the way; but Mandalay surrendered without firing a gun. Theebaw and his Queen Supayalat were removed to Vellore, in the Madras Presidency, but were afterwards sent to Ratnagiri, on the West Coast of India.



GENERAL PRENDERGAST.

necessary to guard the eastern frontier, if France had a protectorate over Upper Burma.



SIR CHARLES BERNARD.

Sir Charles Bernard was the first British Commissioner of Burma. Among his successors were some of the ablest Indian administrators, and the Province has made remarkable progress.

## CAPITALS.

The capitals of Lower and Upper Burma may be briefly described.

RANGOON, the capital of Lower Burma, is situated on the east bank of a branch of the Irawadi, 21 miles from the sea.

The tradition is that the first village on the site of modern Rangoon was founded about 585 B. C., by two brothers, who are said to have passed with 500 carts of merchandise through a forest in which Gautama was then residing. They made an offering of honey to Gautama, and entreated that he would bestow upon them something that they might honour as a relic. He therefore gave them 8 hairs of his head which they brought to their own country. These were enshrined in a pagoda, since known as the Shway (golden) Dagon, near the modern town of Rangoon.

Alompra, after overcoming the Peguans, came down to Dagon, and repaired the great pagoda. He also, for the most part, rebuilt the town, and gave it the name of Ran-Kun (the end of the war) which it has ever since borne. Rangoon, however, remained little more than a group of hovels, just above the level of high tide.

About 1790, the English obtained leave to establish a factory in Rangoon, and it gradually improved. In 1852 it came into their possession. Within six months, steps were taken for laying out regular streets, for raising the general level, and for keeping out the river.

The following description of the city is abridged from Grattan Geary:

The river might easily pass for the lower reaches of the Hugli, the width being about the same; and the country on either land being level, and covered with an abundance of jungle, with here and there marshes and lakelets.

The city of Rangoon is prosperous and ambitious. Two fine pagodas, conspicuous

above all other buildings, distinguish it at first view from Indian cities; but it is obviously a place of business before all. The river is wide and deep, and on one bank there are quays on which are erected the custom-house, the court of justice, and other large buildings, while warehouses and the like continue the long line. A tramway, worked by steam locomotives, facilitates intercommunication. The city is well and simply planned. Certain leading thoroughfares, a hundred feet wide, are parallel to each other, and are connected by cross streets, two of each alternate set of the latter being known by numbers in the American fashion—as 38th Street, 37th Street, the third being known as Phayre Street, &c. The principal streets are kept clean, but the drainage is bad. There is an abundant supply of good water.

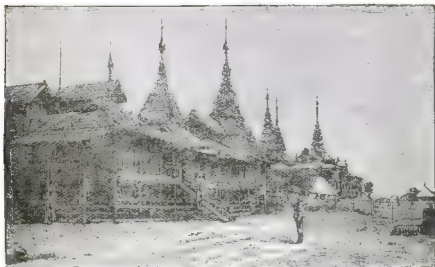
Many of the houses are built of wood on poles, as in other parts of Burma. Lord Dalhousie, when he visited Rangoon after the annexation, presented the city with the magnificent royal gardens as a public park. It contains a series of beautiful little lakes, one of which has been utilised as a water reservoir.

Chinese are numerous in Rangoon. Not bringing women of their own race, they marry Burmese. The children are a great improvement on the Burmese males. They inherit industry from both parents, and grow up models of hard-working thrifty citizens. To them, according to men of foresight, will belong the future of Burma.

Domestic servants are chiefly from Madras, and they must be employed for want of others. At Rangoon no Burmese will take service. Wages are high, but living is expensive.

The commerce at Rangoon now ranks next to that of Calcutta. It is the largest rice port in the world. From January to May the river is crowded with large ships.





A STREET IN MANDALAY.

Indian coolies swarm in the town, and their monotonous chant, "*Eh-ya-mah-la, Tah-ma-lay, Madras Ag-boat Tah-ma-lay*," may be heard at any hour of the night or the morning, floating over the river. The population in 1891 was 180,000.

MANDALAY, the capital of Upper Burma, is about two miles east of the Irawadi, on a level plain at the foot of an isolated hill. The father of Theebaw transferred the seat of Government to Mandalay from the neighbouring city of AMARAPURA in 1860. AVA also adjoining, founded in 1364, was the usual capital until the foundation of Amarapura in 1783, and was again the capital for a time.

The city is laid out in a square, each side of which is a little over a mile in length. It is enclosed by a brick wall, 26 feet high, and 8 feet thick. The wall is pierced with 12 gates, 3 on each side. A deep moat, 100 feet broad, extends along the four sides, and is always kept full of water. It is crossed by 5 bridges.

The palace occupies the central space in

the city. The outermost enclosure consists of a stockade of teak-wood posts, 20 feet high, and within it are three successive enclosures, bounded by brick walls. The front of the palace, which faces the east, contains the Great Hall of Audience, 260 feet long, composed of teak timber, elaborately carved and gilded, erected on a terrace of brick-work, 10 feet high. Behind this hall are the Privy Council Chamber and other offices; and to the westward are the private apartments and the pleasure grounds.

In the same enclosure also stand the treasury, arsenal, mint, stables of the white elephant, and a lofty tower where the water-clock is placed which gave time to the palace and the city. When Theebaw surrendered, the bell-ringers disappeared, and the silence which followed increased the terror of the people. When the English caused the bell to be sounded again, it was understood that the Government had been set going again, and the shops were reopened. In the other two enclosures stand

the Hall of the Supreme Council and the High Court.

The city of Mandalay consists of two parts—one within, the other without the city walls. The streets in the former run parallel with the walls, dividing the building sites into rectangular blocks. The great majority of the houses, both within and without the walls, are constructed of bamboos and bamboo matting, slightly raised from the ground on posts; here and there brick and wooden buildings, generally the property of Mogul and Chinese settlers, are to be found. The streets inside the city are very wide, the principal ones being lined with tamarind trees. Under native rule the only scavengers were a ferocious-looking breed of black pigs and pariah dogs. Sweepers are now employed. The roads have been widened and levelled, and the principal have been metalled.

Some fine pagodas stand on Mandalay Hill to the north of the city. In one of them there is a colossal statue of Buddha, which is remarkable in having the arm extended.

Monasteries and pagodas are dotted about in open spaces, both within and without the city walls.

When Mandalay came under the English, the population was estimated at 65,000; in 1891 it was 189,000. It is now connected with Rangoon by railway.

#### BURMA, PAST AND PRESENT.

Some of the changes which have already taken place, may be briefly mentioned.

1. **War has been replaced by Peace.**—The history of Burma is full of the struggles of the Burmese, Peguans, Arakanese, and Shans for the mastery. Even when the whole country acknowledged one sovereign, rebellions were frequent. To prevent them, Kings, on their accession, usually murdered all their brothers.

2. **Crime has been largely repressed.**—It has been said that the Burmese are "born dakoits." Grattan Geary says, "In Burmese opinion dakoiti is an honest, or, at all events, an excusable and natural employment for villagers in a time of civil war or general disturbance. Each village that does not wish to be the unresisting victim of its neighbours sends out all the young men of valour and a sufficient number of more mature discretion to get what they can lay their hands upon." The wild tribes from the hills also made frequent raids upon the plains. Vigorous effects are being made to put a stop to both classes of crime.

3. **Despotism has been replaced by Constitutional Government.**—The King of Burma regarded the revenue of the country as his private property to be expended as he pleased. One of his titles was the "Lord of Life and Death." Without trial he could order a man to be beheaded or crucified. It has been mentioned that King Tharawadi sometimes himself speared those who offended him. All this has been changed.

4. **Vexatious Laws have been repealed, and a just Code introduced.**—Under native rule there were hundreds of minute regulations about houses, dress, &c., the breach of which brought fines or other punishments. When Lower Burma came under the British, nothing delighted the people so much as their freedom from these enactments, and the permission to bury their dead in any way they pleased. The Laws are now the same as in India, drawn up by able men.

5. **A better class of Government Officers is being raised up.**—The Burmese kings sometimes appointed their menial servants to high offices. No regular salaries were given. Governors and other officials squeezed what they could out of those under them. The laws about dress, &c., afforded ample opportunities for levying fines. Now, educated men are gradually being appointed,

and they receive salaries sufficient to enable them to live without bribery. It will, however, be some time before a thorough reform is brought about. It is especially difficult to get a good police.

6. **The country is being opened up by Railways and Roads.**—Not a mile of these existed under Burmese rule. Six hundred miles of railway have already been constructed. The journey from Rangoon to Mandalay, which formerly required weeks, is now performed in 23 hours. The convenience of travellers and commerce are thus greatly promoted.

7. **Property is safe, and the people are being enriched.**—The laziness of the Burmese is partly accounted for by the former condition of the country. It was of little use to accumulate wealth, as they were liable to be robbed by dakoits and to be plundered by their rulers. Rangoon is an index to the growing wealth of the country. Formerly it was little more than a village, and a few small sailing vessels sufficed for its trade. What a difference now! It is true that much of the gold and silver poured into the country is squandered on feasts or rendered unproductive by being converted into jewels, but this is the fault of the people themselves.

8. **A better system of Education is being provided.**—Along with some good moral lessons, the monks teach false geography, false astronomy, false history, and false religion. The more the pupils learn, the more erroneous notions they acquire.

Government and Mission Schools are now imparting a sound education. Efforts are also being made to improve the Kyoung Schools.

9. **Every improvement adopted by any civilised country in the world is sought to be introduced.**—The Burmese had little or no intercourse with other nations, and did not know what was taking place outside their country. Their semi-civilisation was

therefore stationary. At present things are very different.

### THE NEEDS OF THE BURMESE.

Only a few can be mentioned :

1. **Less Pleasure-seeking and more Industry.**—The failings of the Burmese males in these respects have already been fully noticed. There is a law in Nature, called, "The Survival of the Fittest." This means that the indolent and improvident gradually disappear, their places being taken by the industrious and thrifty. If the Chinese and Indian settlers are not ultimately to occupy the highest place in the country, the Burmese must turn over a new leaf. Burma ought to be the richest province in the Empire. It has great natural advantages.

2. **The avoidance of foreign Vices, and the imitation of foreign Virtues.**—Every nationality has its good and bad qualities; but poor human nature is more apt to copy the latter than the former. The Burmese must take care not to lose their own excellences and acquire foreign defects. Let them copy the industry of the Chinese, but avoid their use of opium and their fondness for gambling. Let them emulate the truthfulness of Englishmen, but shun the use of strong drink.

3. **A Higher Faith is the Greatest Need of Burma.**—Nat worship is universal. This is the superstition of savages. Its prevalence shows the semi-civilised condition of the Burmese. Although Buddhism has a comparatively pure morality, it wants the highest elements of religion. Feeble sinful man is to be his own Saviour. He has no one to whom he can cry for help. There is no pardon of sin. It is said that as the wheel follows the track of the ox, so punishment follows evil doing.

Whom do the Burmese regard as the most exalted of all beings? A dead man,

supposed to be annihilated or no longer to exist. Judson wrote a tract addressed to the Burmese, called *The Golden Balance*, in which Christianity and Buddhism are compared. A single argument may be quoted. "Temporary (lasting only for a time) life, temporary wisdom; eternal life, eternal wisdom." Buddha's wisdom, whatever it may have been, was only for about 45 years; the wisdom of the great Creator is as eternal as His existence. The attention of Burmese is earnestly invited to this little publication. It can be obtained from the Bible and Tract Depot, Rangoon, and from most Missionaries in Burma. *Buddha and his Religion* (Price 1 anna, Post-free, 1½ As.), advertised on the wrapper, may also be read. Let the Burmese, instead of saying, "I make Buddha my refuge," say, "I make the Eternal God my refuge." Then they will be delivered from false fears, and enjoy a happiness before unknown.

#### THE BENEFIT TO INDIA OF THE ANNEXATION OF BURMA.

Some Bengali journalists mourn over the sad fact that the benign rule of the Burmese kings has been superseded by that of the British.

There are, however, other far more sensible editors, who opposed the annexation as supposed to involve a heavy burden upon India. The objections of such deserve to be noticed. On consideration, it will be found that the reverse is the case.

1. *The main object of the last annexation was to prevent India from being saddled with a great increase of military expenditure.* As already explained, if the French had got a hold upon Upper Burma, the Eastern frontier of India would require to be protected somewhat like the West against Russia. If Theebaw had agreed to give up

intriguing with France, he might have been on the throne till this day.

2. *Burma will soon meet all its expenses, and contribute in addition towards the general revenue, diminishing the burden on other Provinces.* Suppose a Zemindar purchases a large estate of excellent land, but which has been greatly neglected and is covered with jungle. While getting it cleared and put into good order, the outlay will exceed the income from it, and fools may blame him; but in the end he reaps the advantage. An outcry was raised against the annexation of Lower Burma, because it was alleged that it would not pay. It did not do so at first, but for at least ten years before the last Burmese war, it yielded a surplus of about a crore of rupees, relieving the Indian revenue to that amount.

To suppress dakoiti and the raids of hill-tribes in Burma, to provide it with railways and other public works, has involved a large outlay; but ere long it will be one of the most prosperous provinces in the Indian Empire, and contribute, proportionally, the largest share of taxation, while Bengal, from its permanent settlement, pays the smallest.

3. *Upper Burma presents a good field for Indian emigration.* If a number of rabbits were shut up in a field surrounded by a high wall, they would multiply till they starved. If the high wall were removed, would they remain within the limits of the field? They would have more sense; they would scatter.

The above represents the condition of India, only many of the people do not act like the sensible rabbits. There is no high wall confining them; but as Sir W. W. Hunter says, "millions cling with a despairing grip to their half acre of earth a piece under a burden of rack-rent or usury," rather than emigrate.

The surplus population of Britain is absorbed by removal to America, Aus-

tralia, &c. In this way both those who go and those who remain are benefited. Indians must do the same. Upper Burma, nearly as large as Bengal, has only 3 millions of inhabitants, while the latter has 74 millions. The over-peopled districts of India should be thinned by emigration. It is true that at present communication between India

and Upper Burma is difficult ; but steps are now being taken to open roads, and in course of time they will be connected by rail.

India and Burma, united, form a magnificent Empire. They will gradually be welded together, and their joint Supreme Legislative Council will be one of the grandest assemblies in the world.



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